

# Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Ancient India

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## CHAPTER 8

### The Morals of the House

*This is 61 page typed manuscript. This is a second copy hut it is having corrections and modifications by Dr. Ambedkar himself. It is reproduced here taking all the corrections into account. There is one separate file entitled 'Manu Smriti or the Gospel of Counter-Revolution '. In that copy notes on Manu Smriti under various categories have been drawn. However, all these notes have been found to be incorporated in this essay, 'Morals of the House.' It is felt that the printing of these notes would be a mere repetition of this essay. Hence, the said copy is not separately printed:*

I

The morals of the Hindus and their religious creed are prescribed by the *Smritis* which form a part of the Sacred literature of the Hindus. It is to the *Smritis* that one must go to understand the Ethics and the Religion of the Hindus. The *Smritis* are by no means few in number. A conservative estimate gives the total number of *Smritis* to be 108. The large number of *Smritis* cannot however make our problem difficult. For though the *Smritis* are numerous they do not differ in essentials. Indeed they repeat one another so closely that reading the *Smritis* creates a most monotonous task. They are all derived from one common source. That source is the *Smriti* of Manu otherwise known as *Manava Dharma Shastra*. The other *Smritis* are faithful repetitions of the *Manu Smriti*. A study of the *Manu Smriti* is therefore quite sufficient to obtain an adequate conception of the moral standards and Religious notions of the Hindus.

It may be said that *Manu Smriti*—and the same is true of the other *Smritis*—is a Code of Laws. It is not a book of Ethics nor is it a book of Religion and to take a book of Laws and to treat it as though it is a book of Ethics and Religion is to confound Ethics, Religion and Law.

In the first place it is only in modern times that Law has been separated from Religion. In all ancient Society, Law and Religion were one. As Prof. Max Muller points out that though :—

"Law seems naturally to be the foundation of society, and the bond that binds a nation together. Those who look below the surface have quickly perceived that law itself, at least ancient law, derives its authority, its force, its very life from religion. . . . The belief that the lawgiver enjoyed some closer intimacy with the Deity than ordinary mortals, pervades the ancient traditions of many nations. According to a well known passage in Diodorus Siculus, the Egyptians believed their laws to have been communicated to Menvis by Hermes; the Cretans held that Minos received his laws from Zeus, the Lacedaemonians that Lykurgus received his laws from Apollon. According to the Arians, their lawgiver Zarathustras had received his Laws from the Good Spirit; According to the Stoe, Zamolixis received his laws from the goddess Hestia; and according to the Jews, Moses received his laws from the God las.

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No one has pointed out more forcibly than Sir Henry Mains that in ancient times religion as a divine influence was underlying and supporting every relation of life and every social institution when he says of Religion as :

"A supernatural presidency (which) is supposed to consecrate and keep together all the cardinal institutions of those times, the state, the Race, and the Family".

From this supernatural presidency of Religion, Law had not succeeded in finding an escape until at a later time when law finally breaks away from religion but not without leaving many traces to show the link it had with Religion at the very beginning of human history.

Again it is only in modern times that a difference is being made between Religion and Ethics. Religion and Ethics are inextricably and indissolubly bound together. Morality and Ethics are essentially practical. As Prof. Jacks insists that the problem of Ethics is not merely getting the Good understood but *realised*, not merely getting the Right placed on scientific basis but *done*. Morality is a mere matter of defining what is good and what is right. Prof. Jacks: rightly says :

"Whenever we embark on the study of morality without interest in its application I cannot but think that it is not morality we are studying. Morality does not arise till the point of application is reached. The effect of a moral theory launched upon the world is next to nothing unless the application of it can be reinforced by powerful motives. The good life, as Aristotle pointed out is a very difficult affair; difficult even when it goes no further than conformity to existing conventions. But when the good life demands that existing standards

must be transcended how can this be effected without an immense liberation of power? Mere information as to why men should do right has no effect against their natural tendencies to do wrong-it is no match for the difficulties that beset good life. "

Unless some motive force comes to its aid morality remains inert. There can be no doubt that what gives motive force to morality is Religion. It is a propelling force which creates, to use again the language of Principal Jacks :

"Motives which are strong enough to overcome the enormous difficulties involved in living the good life, even in its simpler forms, and adequate to maintain that continuous improvement of the moral ideal."

Religion as a motive force reinforces the moral will in various ways. Sometimes it takes the form of sanctions by laying down a scheme of rewards and punishments after death; some times it makes rules of morality as the commandments of God; some times it invests these rules with sanctity which evokes willing obedience. But these are only different ways in which motive power generated by Religion helps to sustain moral life in action. Religion is the dynamics which moves the wheels of morality.

If Ethics and Morality are duties then there can be no doubt that Manu Smriti is a book of Ethics. Any one who takes the trouble to read the Smriti of Manu will have to admit that if there is any subject which figures prominently in the book it is that of duties. Manu was the first to syatematise and codify the duties to which a Hindu was bound. He distinguishes between *Varnashramadharmas* and *Sadharandharmas*. The Varnashramdharmas are the specific duties relating to one's station in life i.e. one's station as determined by one's Varna or caste and one's Ashram or particular stage of life. The Sadharandharmas are duties irrespective of one's age, caste or creed i.e. duties obligatory on man as man and not as a member of a particular community or social class or as being at a particular stage or period of life. The whole book deals with duties and with nothing else.

Manu Smriti is thus a book of Law, Religion and Ethics rolled into one. It is Ethics because it deals with duties of men. It is religion because it deals with Caste which is the soul of Hinduism. It is Law because it prescribes penalties for breach of duties. In this view there is nothing wrong in going to Manu Smriti to ascertain the moral standards and religious notions of the Hindus.

That Manu Smriti is a book of Religion may not be quite obvious. That is because Hinduism is a very illusive term. Different writers have defined it in various ways. Sir D. Ibbetson defines Hinduism as :

"A hereditary sacerdotalism with Brahmins for its devices, the vitality of which is preserved by the social institution of caste and which include all shades and diversities of religion native to India, as distinct from foreign

importations of Christianity and Islam, and from the later outgrowths of Buddhism, more doubtfully of Sikhism and still more doubtfully of Jainism ". Sir J. A. Baines defined Hinduism as :—

"The large residuum that is not Sikh, or Jain, or Buddhist or professedly Animistic, or included in one of the foreign religions such as Islam, Mazdaism, Christianity, or Hebraism." To Sir Edward Gait Hinduism :—

"is a complex congenies of creeds and doctrines. It shelters within its portals monotheists, polytheists, and pantheists; Worshipers of the great God Siva and Vishnu, or of their female counterparts, as well as worshippers of the divine mothers, of the spirits of trees, rocks and streams and of the tutelary village deities; persons who propitiate their deity by all matter of bloody sacrifices, and persons who will not only kill no living creature, but who must not even use the word "cut"; those whose ritual consists mainly of prayers and hymns, and those who indulge in unspeakable orgies in the name of religion".

This discription of complexity is full but is still incomplete. To the list must be added those who revere the cow and those who eat it, those who worship natural forces, and those who worship a single God; those who are worshippers of idols, demons, ghosts, ancestors, saints and heroes.

Such are the answers given by the three Census Commissioners to the simple question what is Hinduism. Others have not found it less difficult to answer the question. Consider how Sir A. Lyall has fared in answering the question. In his "Rede Lecture" delivered at Cambridge in 1891 he said:

"And if I were asked for a definition of Hinduism I could give no precise answer, I could not define it concisely by giving its central doctrines and its essential articles of faith; as I might do in describing of the great historical Religions. For the word Hindu is not exclusively a religious denomination; it denotes also a country, and to certain degree a race. When we speak of Christian, a Mahomedan, or a Buddhist, we mean a particular religious community, in the widest sense, without distinction of race or place. When we talk of a Russian or a Persian, we indicate country or parentage without distinction of creed. But when a person tells me that he is a Hindu, I know that he means all three things together— Religion. Parentage and Country." Speaking of Hinduism as a Religion Sir Alfred Lyall said that:

"Hindism was a tangled muggle of disorderly superstitions, the collection of rights, worships, beliefs, traditions and mythologies, that are sanctioned by the sacred books and ordinances of the Brahmins and are propogated by Brahmanic teachings." Lastly I will quote the defintion given by a Hindu Mr. G. P. Sen who not merely a Hindu but is a student of Hinduism. In his book called 'Introduction to the study of Hinduism' Mr. Sen says :—

"Hinduism is what the Hindus, or a major portion of them in a Hindu Community do."

Is there then no principle in Hinduism which all Hindus no matter what their other differences are, feel bound to render willing obedience? It seems to me there is and that principle is the principle of Caste. There may be a difference of opinion as to which matters constitute matters of essence so far as Hinduism is concerned. But there can be no doubt that Caste is one and an essential and integral part of Hinduism. Every Hindu—if he is not merely a statutory Hindu—believes in Caste and every Hindu—even one who prides himself on being a statutory Hindu—has a Caste. A Hindu is as much born into caste as he is born in Hinduism. Indeed a person cannot be born in Hinduism unless he is born in a Caste. Caste and Hinduism are inseparable. As Prof. Max Muller observes :

"Modern Hinduism rests on the system of Caste as on a rock which no arguments can shake."

It therefore follows that in so far as Manu lays down the creed of the Caste and in so far as Hinduism at its core is the creed of Caste the Manu Smriti must be accepted as the Book of Religion.

## II

What are the Ethical and Religious norms prescribed by Manu for Hindus to observe and follow?

To begin with, Manu divides Hindus into four varnas or social orders. He not only divides Hindus into four orders he also grades them. The following is his scheme of gradation.

X. 3. On account of his pre-eminence, on account of the superiority of his origin, on account of his observance of (particular) restrictive rules, and on account of his particular sanctification the Brahman is the Lord of (all) Varnas.

He proceeds to amplify his reasons and does so in the following characteristic manner :—

1. 93. As the Brahmana sprang from (Prajapati's i.e. Gods) mouth, as he was first-born, and as he possesses the Veda, he is by right the lord of this whole creation.

1. 94. For the self existent (Svayambhu i.e. God), having performed austerities, produced him first from his own mouth, in order that the offerings might be conveyed to the Gods and Manes and that this universe might be preserved.

1. 95. What created being can surpass him, through whose mouth the Gods continually consume the sacrificial viands and the manes the offerings to the dead.

1. 96. Of created beings the most excellent are said to be those which are animated; of the animated, those who subsist by intelligence: of the intelligent, mankind; and of the men, the Brahmans.

Besides the reason given by Manu the Brahmin is first in rank because he was produced by God from his mouth, in order that the offerings might be conveyed to the Gods and manes. Manu gives another reason for the supremacy of the Brahmans. He says :—

1. 98. The very birth of a Brahmana is an eternal incarnation of the sacred Law (Veda); for he is born to (fulfil) the sacred law, and become one with Brahman (God).

1. 99. A Brahmana, coming into existence, is born as the highest on earth, the lord of all created beings, for the protection of the treasury of the Law. Manu concludes by saying that :

1. 101. The Brahmana eats but his own food, wears but his own apparel, bestows but his own alms; other mortals subsist through the benevolence of the Brahmana." Because according to Manu :

1. 100. Whatever exists in the world is the property of the Brahmana; on account of the excellence of his origin the Brahmana is, indeed, entitled to it all.

It is really an understatement to say that according to Manu the Brahman is a lord of all creation. For Manu gives a warning to the effect that :-

IX. 317. A Brahmana, be he ignorant or learned, is a great divinity, just as the fire, whether carried forth (for the performance of a burnt oblation) or not carried forth, is a great divinity.

IX. 319. Thus, though the Brahmans employ themselves in all (sorts) of mean occupations, they must be honoured in every way; (for each of) them is a very great deity.

Being a deity the Brahmin is above law and above the King. Manu directs :-

VII. 37. Let the King, after rising early in the morning, worship Brahmans who are well versed in the threefold sacred science and learned (in polity), and follow their advice VII. 38. Let him daily worship aged Brahmans who know the Veda and are pure..... Finally Manu says :

XI. 35. The Brahman is (hereby) declared (to be) the creator (of the world), the punisher, the teacher, (and hence) a benefactor (of all created beings); to him let no man say anything unpropitious, nor use any harsh words.

In the Code of Manu there are rules regarding the different occupations which the different orders are required to follow:

I. 88. To Brahmans he (Swayambhu Manu) assigned the duties of reading the Veda, of teaching it, of sacrificing, of assisting others to sacrifice, of giving alms, if they the rich, and if indigent, of receiving of gifts.

I. 89. To defend the people, to give alms, to sacrifice, to read the Veda, to shun the allurements of sensual gratification, are, in a few words, the duties of a Kshatriya.

I. 90. To keep herds of cattle, to bestow largeness, to sacrifice, to read the scriptures, to carry on trade, to lend at interest, and to cultivate land are prescribed or permitted to a Vaisya.

1. 91. One principal duty the supreme Ruler assigns to a Sudra; namely, to serve the before mentioned classes, without depreciating their worth.

X. 74. Let such Brahmans as are intent on the means of attaining the supreme Godhead, and firm in their own duties, completely perform, in order, the six following acts:

X. 75. Reading the Vedas, the teaching others to read them, sacrificing, and assisting others, to sacrifice, giving to the poor if themselves have enough, and accepting gifts from the virtuous if themselves are poor, are the six prescribed acts of the first born class;

X. 76. But, among those six acts of a Brahmin, three are his means of subsistence; assisting to sacrifice, teaching the Vedas, and receiving gifts from a pure handed giver.

X. 77. Three acts of duty cease with the Brahman, and belong not to the Kshatriya; teaching the Vedas, officiating at a sacrifice, and, thirdly, receiving presents.

X. 78. Those three are also (by the fixed rule of law) forbidden to the Vaisya; since Manu, the Lord of all men, prescribed not those acts to the two classes, military and commercial.

X. 79. The means of subsistence, peculiar to the Kshatriya, are bearing arms, either held for striking or missile, to the Vaisya, merchandize, attending on cattle, and agriculture but with a view to the next life, the duties of both are almsgiving, reading, sacrificing." Besides prescribing rank and occupation Manu grants privileges to certain orders and imposes penalties on certain orders. As to privileges those relating to marriage may be referred to first. Manu says :

III. 12. For the first marriage of the twice born classes, a woman of the same class is recommended but for such as are impelled by inclination to marry again, women in the direct order of the classes are to be preferred :

III. 13. A Sudra woman only must be the wife of a Sudra; she and a Vaisya, of a Vaisya; they two and a Kshatriya, of a Kshatriya; those three and a Brahmani of a Brahman. Then there are privileges relating to occupations. These privileges stand out quite prominently when Manu deals with the question as to what a person is to do when he is in distress :

X. 81. Yet a Brahmen, unable to subsist by his duties just mentioned, may live by the duty of a soldier; for that is the next in rank.

X. 82. If it be asked, how he must live, should he be unable to get a subsistence by either of those employments; the answer is, he may subsist as a mercantile man, applying himself in person to tillage and attendance on cattle.

X. 83. But a Brahman and a Kshatriya, obliged to subsist by the acts of a Vaisya, must avoid with care, if they can live by keeping herds, the business of tillage, which gives great pain to sentient creatures, and is dependent on the labour of others, as bulls and so forth.

X. 84. Some are of opinion, that agriculture is excellent, but it is a mode of subsistence which the benevolent greatly blame, for the iron mouthed pieces of wood not only wound the earth, but the creatures dwelling in it.

85. If through want of a virtuous livelihood, they cannot follow laudable occupations, they may then gain a competence of wealth by selling commodities usually sold by merchants, avoiding what ought to be avoided.

X. 86. They must avoid selling liquids of all sorts, dressed grain, seeds of tila, stones, salt, cattle, and human creatures.

X. 87. All woven cloth dyed red, cloth made of sana, of cshuma-bark, and of wool, even though not red; fruit, roots, and medicinal plants.

X. 88. Water, iron, poison, flesh-meat, the moon-plant, and perfumes of any sort; milk, honey, butter milk, clarified butter, oil of tila, wax sugar, and blades of cusa grass;

X. 89. All beasts of the forest, as deer and the like, ravenous beasts, birds, and fish; spirituous liquors, nili, or indigo, and lascha, or lac; and all beasts with uncloven hoofs.

X. 90. But the brahmen-husbandman may at pleasure sell pure tila-seeds for the purpose of holy rites, if he keep them not long with a hope of more gain, and shall have produced them by his own culture.;

X. 91. If he apply seeds of tila to any purpose but food, anointing, and sacred oblations, he shall be plunged, in the shape of a worm, together with his parents, into the ordure of dogs.

X. 92. By selling flesh-meat, lac or salt, a Brahmen immediately sinks low; by selling milk three days, he falls to a level with a Sudra.

X. 93. And by selling the other forbidden commodities with his own free will, he assumes in this world, after seven nights, the nature of a mere Vaisya.

X. 94. Fluid things may, however, be bartered for other fluids, but not salt for anything liquid; so may dressed grain for grain undressed, and tila-seeds for grain in the husk, equal weights or measures being given and taken.



X. 102. The Brahmen having fallen into distress, may receive gifts from any person whatever; for by no sacred rule can it be shown, that absolute purity can be sullied.

X. 103. From interpreting the Veda, from officiating at sacrifices, or from taking presents, though in modes generally disapproved, no sin is committed by priests in distress; for they are as pure as fire or water.

Compare with this what Manu has to say with regard, to what the other Varnas can do in an emergency, Manu says :

X. 96. A man of lowest class, who, through covetousness, lives by the acts of the highest, let the king strip of all his wealth and instantly banish.

X. 97. His own office, though defectively performed, is preferable to that of another, though performed completely; for he, who without necessity discharges the duties of another class, immediately forfeits his own.

X. 98. A mercantile man, unable to subsist by his own duties, may descend even to the servile acts of a Sudra, taking care never to do what ought never to be done; but, when he has gained a competence, let him depart from service.

X. 99. A man of fourth class, not finding employment by waiting on the twice born, while his wife and son are tormented with hunger, may subsist by handicrafts.

X. 121. If a Sudra want a subsistence and cannot attend priest, he may serve a Kshatriya; or, if he cannot wait on a soldier by birth, he may gain his livelihood by serving an opulent Vaisya.

X. 122. To him, who serves Brahmen, with a view to a heavenly reward, or even with view to both this life and the next, the union of the word Brahmen with his name of servant will assuredly bring success.

X. 123. Attendance on Brahmen is pronounced the best work of Sudra; whatever else he may perform will comparatively avail him nothing.

X. 124. They must allot him a fit maintenance according to their own circumstances, after considering his ability, his exertions, and the number of those, whom he must provide with nourishment.

X. 125. What remains of their dressed rice must be given to him, and apparel which they have worn, and the refuse of their grain, and their old household furniture.

X. 126. There is no guilt in a man of the servile class who eats leeks and other forbidden vegetables; he must not have the sacred investiture; he has no business with the duty of making oblations to fire and the like, but there is no prohibition against his offering dressed grain as a sacrifice, by way of discharging his own duty.

X. 127. Even Sudras, who were anxious to perform their entire duty, and, knowing what they should perform, imitate the practice of good men in the household sacraments, but without any holy text, except those containing praise and salutations, are so far from sinning, that they acquire just applause.

X. 128. As a Sudra, without injuring another man, performs the lawful acts of the twice-born, even thus, without being censured, he gains exaltation in this world and in the next.

X. 129. No superfluous collection of wealth must be made by a Sudra, even though he has power to make it, since a servile man, who has amassed riches, becomes proud, and, by his insolence or neglect, gives pain even to Brahmens. He concludes :—

X. 130. Such, as have been fully declared, are the several duties of the four classes in distress for subsistence, and, if they perform them exactly, they shall attain the highest beatitude. The privileges to some were not merely social they were also financial, Says Manu :—

VIII. 35. From the man, who shall say with truth, 'This property, which has been kept, belongs to me', the king may take a sixth or twelfth part, for having secured it.

VIII. 36. But he, who shall say so falsely, may be fined either an eighth part of his own property, or else in some small proportion to the value of the goods falsely claimed, a just calculation having been made.

VIII. 37. A learned Brahmen, having found a treasure formerly hidden, may take it without any deduction; since he is the lord of all.

VIII. 38. But of a treasure anciently deposited under ground, which any other subject or the king has discovered, the king may lay up half in his treasury having given half to the Brahmens.

IX. 323. Should the king be near his end through some incurable disease, he must bestow on the priests all his riches, accumulated his kingdom to his son, let him seek death in battle, or if there be no war, by abstaining from food.

VII. 127. Having ascertained the rates of purchase and sale, the length of the way, the expenses of food and of condiments the charges of securing the goods carried, and the net profits of trade, let the king oblige traders to pay taxes on their saleable commodities.

VII. 128. After full consideration, let a king so levy those taxes continually in his dominions, that both he and the merchant may receive a just compensation for their several acts.

VII. 129. As the leech, the suckling calf, and the bee, take their natural food by little and little, thus must a king draw from his dominions an annual revenue.

VII. 130. Of cattle, of gems, of gold and silver, added each year to the capital stock, a fiftieth part may be taken by the king; of grain, an eighth part, a sixth, or a twelfth, according to the difference of the soil, and the labour necessary to cultivate it. VII. 131. He may also take a sixth part of the clear annual increase of trees, fleshmeat, honey, clarified butter, perfumes, medical substances, liquids, flowers, roots, and fruit.

VII. 132. Of gathered leaves, pot-herbs, grass, utensils made with leather or cane, earthen pots, and all things made of stone.

VII. 132. A king, even though dying with want, must not receive any tax from a Brahman learned in the Vedas, nor suffer such a Brahman, residing in his territories, to be afflicted with hunger.

VII. 134. Of that king, in whose dominion a learned Brahman is afflicted with hunger, the whole kingdom will in a short time be afflicted with famine.

VII. 137. Let the king order a mere trifle to be paid, in the name of the annual tax, by the meaner inhabitants of his realm, who subsist by petty traffic.

VII. 138. By low handicraftsmen, artificers, and servile men, who support themselves by labour, the king may cause work to be done for a day in each month.

VIII. 394. Neither a blind man, nor an idiot, nor a cripple, nor a man full seventy years old, nor one who confers great benefits on priests of eminent learning, shall be compelled by any king to pay taxes.

X. 118. A military king, who takes even a fourth part of the crops of his realm at a time of urgent necessity, as of war or invasion, and protects his people to the utmost of his power, commits no sin :

X. 119. His peculiar duty is conquest, and he must not recede from battle; so that, while he defends by his arms the merchant and husbandman, he may levy the legal tax as the price of protection.

X. 120. The tax on the mercantile class, which in times of prosperity must be only a twelfth part of their crops, and a fiftieth of their personal profits, may be an eighth of their crops in a time of distress, or a sixth, which is the medium, or even a fourth in great public adversity ; but a twentieth of their gains on money, and other moveables, is the highest tax ; serving men, artisans, and mechanics. must assist by their labour, but at no time pay taxes.

X. 187. To the nearest sapinda, male or female, after him in the third degree, the inheritance next belongs ; then, on failure of sapindas and of their

issue the samanodaca, or distant kinsman, shall be the heir ; or the spiritual preceptor, or the pupil, or the fellow student, of the deceased.

IX. 188. On failure of all those, the lawful heirs are such Brahmens, as have read the three Vedas, as are pure in body and mind, as have subdued their passions ; and they must consequently offer the cake; thus the rites of obsequies cannot fail.

IX. 189. The property of a Brahmen shall never be taken as an escheat by the king; this is a fixed law; but the wealth of the other classes, on failure of all heirs, the king may take. The terms on which the different social orders should carry on their associated life has been defined by Manu in a set of rules which form a very important part of the morals of the Hindu House. Manu ordains that :

X. 3. From priority of birth, from superiority of origin, from a more exact knowledge of scripture, and from a distinction in the sacrificial thread, the Brahmen is the lord of all classes.

IX. 317. A Brahmen, whether learned or ignorant, is a powerful divinity ; even as fire is powerful divinity, whether consecrated or popular.

IX. 319. Thus, although Brahmens employ themselves in all sorts of mean occupations, they must invariably be honoured ; for they are something transcendently divine.

VII. 35. A king was created as the protector of all those classes and orders, who, from the first to the last, discharge their several duties.

VII. 36. And all, that must be done by him, for the protection of his people, with the assistance of good ministers, I will declare to you, as the law directs, in due order.

VII. 37. Let the king, having risen at early dawn, respectfully attend to Brahmens, learned in the three Vedas, and in the science of ethics, and by their decision let him abide.

VII. 38. Constantly must he show respect to Brahmens, who have grown old, both in years and in piety, who know the scriptures, who in body and mind are pure ; for he, who honours the aged, will perpetually be honoured even by cruel demons :

IX. 313. Let him not, although in the greatest distress for money, provoke Brahmens to anger by taking their prosperty ; for they, once enraged, could immediately by sacrifices and imprecations destroy him with his troops, elephants, horses and cars.

Such was to be the relationship in the field of political life. For ordinary social intercourse between the different Varnas Manu lays down the following rules :—

III. 68. A house-keeper has five places of slaughter, or where small living creatures may be slain ; his kitchen-hearth, his grindstone, his broom, his pestle and mortar, his water-pot ; by using which, he becomes in bondage to sin :

III. 69. For the sake of expiating offences committed ignorantly in those places mentioned in order, the five great sacraments were appointed by eminent sages to be performed each day by such as keep house.

III. 70. Teaching and studying the scripture is the sacrament of the Veda ; offering cakes and water, the sacrament of the Manes, an oblation to fire, the sacrament of the Deities ; giving rice or other food to living creatures, the sacrament of spirits ; receiving guests with honour, the sacrament of men.

III. 71. Whoever omits not those five great ceremonies, if he have ability to perform them, is untainted by the sons of the five slaughtering places, even though he constantly reside at home ;

111.84. In his domestic fire for dressing the food of all the Gods, after the prescribed ceremony, let a Brahmen make an oblation each day to these following divinities. After it is offered to the deities Manu directs :—

III. 92. The share of dogs, of outcasts, of dog-feeders, of sinful men, punished with elephantiasis or consumption, of crows, and of reptiles, let him drop on the ground by little and little. With regard to the rules of hospitality Manu directs the householder:

III. 102. A Brahmen, staying but one night as a guest, is called an atithi, since continuing so short a time, he is not even a sojourner for a whole tithi, or day of the moon.

III. 98. But an offering in the fire of a sacerdotal mouth, which richly blazes with true knowledge and piety, will release the giver from distress and even from deadly sin.

III. 107. To the highest guests in the best form, to the lowest in the worst, to the equal equally, let him offer seats, resting places, couches; giving them proportionable attendance when they depart; and honour, as long as they stay.

III. 110. A military man is not denominated a guest in the house of a Brahman; nor a man of the commercial or servile class ; nor his familiar friend, nor his paternal kinsmen ; nor his preceptor.

III. 111. But if a warrior come to his house in the form of a guest, let food be prepared for him, according to his desire, after the beforementioned Brahmens have eaten.

III. 112. Even to a merchant or a labourer, approaching his house in the manner of guests, let him give food, showing marks of benevolence at the same time with his domestics. On social bearing of one class towards another

Manu has laid down some very interesting ordinances. He has an equation for social status :

II. 135. The student must consider a Brahmen, though but ten years old, and a Kshatriya, though aged a hundred years, as father and son ; as between those two, the young Brahmen is to be respected as the father.

II. 136. Wealth, kindred, age, moral conduct, and, fifthly divine knowledge, entitle men to respect ; but that which is last mentioned in order, is the most respectable.

II. 137. Whatever man of the three highest classes possesses the most of those five, both in number and degree that man is entitled to most respect ; even a Sudra, if he have entered the tenth decade of his age.

II. 138. Way must be made for a man in a wheeled carriage, or above ninety years old, or afflicted with disease, or carrying a burthen ; for a woman ; for a priest just returned from the mansion of his preceptor; for a prince, and for a bridegroom.

II. 139. Among all those, if they be met at one time, the priest just returned home and the prince are most to be honoured ; and of those two, the priest just returned, should be treated with more respect than the prince.

As illustrating the rules of social bearing a reference may be made to rules regarding salutation:

II. 121. A youth who habitually greets and constantly reverses the aged, obtains an increase of four things; life, knowledge, fame, strength.

II. 122. After the word of salutation, a Brahman must address an elder; saying, "I am such an one," pronouncing his own name.

II. 123. If any persons, through ignorance of the Sanskrit language, understand not the import of his name, to them should a learned man say, " It is I "; and in that manner he should address all classes of women.

II. 124. In the salutation he should pronounce, after his own name, the vocative particle `bhoh'; for the particle 'bhoh' is held by the wise to have the same property with names fully expressed.

II. 125. A Brahmen should thus be saluted in return; "May'st thou live long, excellent man", and at the end of his name, the vowel and preceding consonant should be lengthened, with an acute accent, to three syllabic moments or short vowels.

II. 126. That Brahmen, who knows not the form of returning a salutation, must not be saluted by a man of learning; as a Shudra, even so is he.

II. 127. Let a learned man ask a priest, when he meets him, if his devotion prospers, a warrior, if he is unhurt; a merchant, if his wealth is secure; and one of the servile classes, if he enjoys good health; using respectively the words, cusalam, anamayam, ksheman and anarogyam.

The provisions laid down by Manu in relation to Religion and Religious Sacraments and Sacrifice are worthy of note.

The ordinances of Manu relating to Sacraments and sacrifices are as follows :

III. 68. A house-keeper has five places of slaughter, or where small living creatures may be slain; his kitchen-hearth, his grindstone, his broom, his pestle and mortar, his water-pot; by using which, he become in bondage to sin.

III. 69. For the sake of expiating offences committed ignorantly in those places mentioned in order, the five great sacraments were appointed by eminent sages to be performed each day by such as keep house.

III. 70. Teaching and studying the scriptures is the sacrament of the Veda; offering cakes and water, the sacrament of the Manes, an oblation to fire, the sacrament of the Deities; giving rice or other food to living creatures, the sacraments of spirits; receiving guests with honour, the sacrament of men.

III. 71. Whoever omits not those five great ceremonies, if he have ability to perform them, is untainted by the sins of the five slaughtering places, even though he constantly reside at home. Manu then proceeds to lay down that all are not entitled to the benefit of the sacraments and all have not the same right to perform the sacrifices.

He defines the position of women and Shudras in the matter of Sacraments and sacrifices. As to women Manu says :—

II. 66. The same ceremonies, except that of the sacrificial thread, must be duly performed for women at the same age and in the same order, that the body may be made perfect; but without any text from the Veda." As to Shudras, Manu says:—

X. 127. Even Shudras, who were anxious to perform their entire duty, and, knowing what they should perform imitate the practice of good men in the household sacraments, but without any holy text, except those containing praise and salutation, are so far from sinning, that they acquire just applause.

The investiture of a person with the sacred thread is a very important sacrament.

II. 36. In the eighth year from the conception of a Brahman., in the eleventh from that of a Kshatriya, and in the twelfth from that of a Vaisya, let the father invest the child with the mark of his class.

II. 37. Should a Brahman, or his father for him, be desirous of his advancement in sacred knowledge; a Kshatriya, of extending his power; or a Vaisya of engaging in mercantile business; the investiture may be made in the fifth, sixth, or eighth years respectively.

II. 38. The ceremony of investiture hallowed by the Gayatri must not be delayed, in the case of a priest, beyond the sixteenth year; nor in that of a soldier, beyond the twenty second; nor in that of a merchant, beyond the twenty fourth.

II. 39. After that, all youths of these three classes, who have not been invested at the proper time, become vratyas, or outcasts, degraded from the Gayatri, and condemned by the virtuous. As to the *Gayatri* it is a *mantra* and this is how Manu explains its importance :—

II. 76. Brahma milked out, as it were, from the three Vedas, the letter A, the letter U, and the letter M which form by their coalition the trilateral monosyllable, together with three mysterious words bhur, bhuvah, svah or earth, sky, heaven.

II. 77. From the three Vedas, also, the Lord of creatures, incomprehensibly exalted, successively milked out the three measures of that ineffable text, beginning with the word tad, and entitled Savitri or Gayatri.

II. 78. A priest who shall know the Veda, and shall pronounce to himself, both morning and evening, that syllable, and that holy text preceded by the three words, shall attain the sanctity which the Veda confers :

II. 79. And a twice born man, who shall a thousand times repeat those three (om, the vyahritis, and the gayatri), apart from the multitude, shall be released in a month even from a great offence, as a snake from his slough.

II. 80. The priest, the soldier, and the merchant, who shall neglect this mysterious text, and fail to perform in due season his peculiar acts of piety, shall meet with contempt among the virtuous.

II. 81. The great immutable words, preceded by the trilateral syllable, and followed by the gayatri which consists of three measures, must be considered as the mouth, or principal part of the Veda;

II. 82. Whoever shall repeat, day by day, for three years, without negligence, that sacred text, shall hereafter approach the divine essence, move as freely as air, and assume an ethereal form. II. 83. The trilateral monosyllable is an emblem of the Supreme, the suppressions of breath with a mind fixed on God are the highest devotion; but nothing is more exalted than the Gayatri; a declaration of truth is more excellent than silence.

II. 84. All rites ordained in the Veda, oblations to fire, and solemn sacrifices pass away ; but that which passes not away, is declared to be the syllable om, thence called acshara ; since it is a symbol of God, the Lord of created beings.

II. 85. The act of repeating his Holy Name is ten times better than the appointed sacrifice; an hundred times better when it is heard by no man ; and a thousand times better when it is purely mental.



II. 86. The four domestic sacraments which are accompanied with the appointed sacrifice, are not equal though all be united, to a sixteenth part of the sacrifice performed by a repetition of the gayatri. This investiture is equivalent to a new birth.

II. 147. Let a man consider that as a mere human birth, which his parents gave him for their mutual gratification, and which he receives after lying in the womb.

II. 148. But that birth which his principal acharya, who knows the whole Veda, procures for him by his divine mother the gayatri, is a true birth ; that birth is exempt from age and from death.

II. 169. The first birth is from a natural mother: the second, from the ligation of the zone ; the third from the due performance of the sacrifice ; such are the births of him who is usually called twice-born, according to a text of the Veda.

II. 170. Among them his divine birth is that, which is distinguished by the ligation of the zone, and sacrificial cord ; and in that birth the Gayatri is his mother, and the Acharya, his father. This sacrament is not permitted by Manu to Shudras and to women.

II. 103. But he who stands not repeating it in the morning and sits not repeating it in the evening, must be precluded, like a Sudra, from every sacred observance of the twice born class. Manu has not forgotten to mention rules relating to education and learning. Manu has nothing to say about mass education. He does not see the utility of it and he does not see the necessity of imposing any obligation upon the king or the state. He was merely concerned with the learning of the sacred and Religious literature namely the Vedas.

Veda must be learned from a preceptor and with his assent. No one can read and study the Vedas by himself. He will be guilty of theft if he did it.

II. 116. He who shall acquire knowledge of the Veda without the assent of his preceptor, incurs the guilt of stealing the scripture and shall sink to the region of torment. But others cannot study at all.

IX. 18. Women have no business with the texts of the Veda; thus is the law fully settled ; having, therefore, no evidence of law, and no knowledge of expiatory texts, sinful women must be as foul as falsehood itself; and this is a fixed rule.

IV. 99. He must never read the Veda without accents and letters well pronounced ; nor even in the presence of Sudras ; nor, having begun to read it in the last watch of the night, must he, though fatigued, sleep again.

This prohibition applies to *Vratyas* or outcasts from the three higher classes. For Manu says :

II. 40. With such impure men, let no Brahmen, even in distress for subsistence, ever form a connexion in law, either by the study of the Veda, or by affinity.

Teaching Veda or performing of sacrifices for disqualified persons was prohibited by Manu.

IV. 205. Never let a priest eat part of a sacrifice not begun with texts of the Veda, nor of one performed by a common sacrificer, by a woman, or by an eunuch :

IV. 206. When those persons offer the clarified butter, it brings misfortune to good men, and raises aversion in the deities, such oblations, therefore, he must carefully shun.

XI. 198. He, who has officiated at a sacrifice for outcasts, or burned the corpse of a stranger, or performed rites to destroy the innocent, or made the impure sacrifice, called Ahimsa, may expiate his guilt by three prajapatya penances. Take equality before Law.

When they come as witnesses—according to Manu they are to be sworn as follows :

VIII. 87. In the forenoon let the judge, being purified, severally call on the twice-born, being purified also, to declare the truth, in the presence of some image, a symbol of the divinity, and of Brahmens, while the witnesses turn their faces either to the north or to the east.

VIII. 88. To a Brahmen he must begin with saying, "Declare;" to a Kshatriya, with saying, " Declare the truth"; to a Vaisya, with comparing perjury to the crime of stealing kine, grain, or gold; to a Sudra, with comparing it in some or all of the following sentences, to every crime that men can commit.

VIII. 1 13. Let the judge cause a priest to swear by his veracity ; a soldier, by his horse, or elephant, and his weapons; a merchant, by his kine, grain, and gold; a mechanic or servile man, by imprecating on his own head, if he speak falsely, all possible crime; Manu also deals with cases of witnesses giving false evidence. According to Manu giving false evidence is a crime. Says Manu:

VIII. 122. Learned men have specified these punishments, which were ordained by sage legislators for perjured witnesses, with a view to prevent a failure of justice and to restrain iniquity.

VIII. 123. Let a just prince banish men of the three lower classes, if they give false evidence having first levied the fine ; but a Brahmen let him only banish." But Manu made one exception:

VIII. 1 12. To women, however, at a time of dalliance, or on a proposal of marriage, in the case of grass or fruit eaten by a cow, of wood taken for a sacrifice, or of a promise made for the preservation of a Brahmen, it is deadly

sin to take a light oath. As parties to proceedings—Their position can be illustrated by quoting the ordinances of Manu relating to a few of the important criminal offences dealt with by Manu. Take the offence of Defamation. Manu says :

VIII. 267. A soldier, defaming a priest, shall be fined a hundred panas a merchant, thus offending, an hundred and fifty, or two hundred : but, for such an offence, a mechanic or servile man shall be whipped.

VIII. 268. A priest shall be fined fifty, if he slander a soldier; twenty five, if a merchant ; and twelve, if he slander a man of the servile class. Take the offence of Insult—Manu says:

VIII. 270. A once-born man, who insults the twice-born with gross invectives, ought to have his tongue slit ; for he sprang from the lowest part of Brahma.

VIII. 271. If he mention their names and classes with contumely as, if he say, "Oh Devadatta, thou refuse of Brahmen", an iron style, ten fingers long, shall be thrust red into his mouth.

VIII. 272. Should he, through pride, give instruction to priests concerning their duty, let the king order some hot oil to be dropped into his mouth and his ear. Take the offence of Abuse—Manu says:

VIII. 276. For mutual abuse by a priest and a soldier, this fine must be imposed by a learned king; the lowest amercement on the priest, and the middle-most on the soldier.

VIII. 277. Such exactly, as before mentioned, must be the punishment for a merchant and a mechanic, in respect of their several classes, except the slitting of the tongue; this is a fixed rule of punishment. Take the offence of Assault—Manu propounds:

VIII. 279. With whatever member of a low-born man shall assault or hurt a superior, even that member of his must be slit, or cut more or less in proportion to the injury; this an ordinance of Manu.

VIII. 280. He who raises his hand or a staff against another, shall have his hand cut ; and he, who kicks another in wrath, shall have an incision made in his foot. Take the offence of Arrogance—According to Manu :

VIII. 281. A man of the lowest class, who shall insolently place himself on the same seat with one of the highest, shall either be banished with a mark on his hinder parts, or the king shall cause a gash to be made on his buttock.

VIII. 282. Should he spit on him through pride, the king shall order both his lips to be gashed; should he urinate on him, his penis; should he break wind against him, his anus.

VIII. 283. If he seize the Brahmen by the locks, or by the feet, or by the beard, or by the throat, or by the scrotum, let the king without hesitation cause incisions to be made in his hands. Take the offence of Adultery. Says Manu:

VIII. 359. A man of the servile class, who commits actual adultery with the wife of a priest, ought to suffer death ; the wives, indeed, of all the four classes must ever be most especially guarded.

VIII. 366. A low man, who makes love to a damsel of high birth, ought to be punished corporally; but he who addresses a maid of equal rank, shall give the nuptial present and marry her, if her father please.

VIII. 374. A mechanic or servile man, having an adulterious connection with a woman of a twice-born class, whether guarded at home or unguarded, shall thus be punished ; if she was unguarded, he shall lose the part offending, and his whole substance ; if guarded, and a priestless, every thing, even his life.

VIII. 375. For adultery with a guarded priestess, a merchant shall forfeit all his wealth after imprisonment for a year; a soldier shall be fined a thousand panas, and be shaved with the urine of an ass.

VIII. 376. But, if a merchant or soldier commit adultery with a woman of the sacerdotal class, whom her husband guards not at home, the king shall only fine the merchant five hundred, and the soldier a thousand ;

VIII. 377. Both of them, however, if they commit that offence with a priestess not only guarded but eminent for good qualities, shall be punished like men of the servile class, or be burned in a fire of dry grass or reeds.

VIII. 382. If a merchant converse criminally with a guarded woman of the military, or a soldier with one of the mercantile class, they both deserve the same punishment as in the case of a priestess unguarded.

VIII. 383. But a Brahmen, who shall commit dultery with a guarded woman of those two classes, must be fined a thousand panas ; and for the like offence with a guarded woman of the servile class, the fine of a soldier or a merchant shall be also one thousand.

VIII. 384. For adultery with a woman of the military class, if unguarded, the fine of a merchant is five hundred ; but a soldier, for the converse of that offence, must be shaved with urine, or pay the fine just mentioned.

VIII. 385. A priest shall pay five hundred panas if he connect himself criminally with an unguarded woman of the military, commercial, or servile class, and a thousand, for such a connexion with a woman of vile mixed breed.

Turning to the system of punishment for offences Manu's Scheme throws an interesting light on the subject. Consider the following ordinances :

VIII. 379. Ignominious tonsure is ordained, instead of capital punishment, for an adulterer of the priestly class, where the punishment of other classes may extend to loss of life.

VIII. 380. Never shall the king slay a Brahmen, though convicted of all possible crimes: let him banish the offender from his realm, but with all his property secure, and his body unhurt.

XI. 127. For killing intentionally a virtuous man of the military class, the penance must a fourth part of that ordained for killing a priest ; for killing a Vaisya, only an eighth ; for killing a Sudra, who had been constant in discharging his duties, a sixteenth part.

XI. 128. But, if a Brahmen kill a Kshatriya without malice, he must, after a full performance of his religious rites, give the priests one bull together with a thousand cows.

XI. 129. Or he may perform for three years the penance for slaying a Brahmen, mortifying his organs of sensation and action, letting his hair grow long, and living remote from the town, with the root of a tree for his mansion.

XI. 130. If he kill without malice a Vaisya, who had a good moral character, he may perform the same penance for one year, or give the priests a hundred cows and a bull.

XI. 131. For six months must he perform this whole penance, if without intention he kill a Sudra ; or he may give ten white cows and a bull to the priests.

VIII. 381. No greater crime is known on earth than slaying a Brahmen ; and the king, therefore, must not even form in his mind an idea of killing a priest.

VIII. 126. Let the king having considered and ascertained the frequency of a similar offence, the place and time, the ability of the criminal to pay or suffer and the crime itself, cause punishment to fall on those alone, who deserve it.

VIII. 124. Manu, son of the Self-existent, has named ten places of punishment, which are appropriate to the three lower classes, but a Brahmen must depart from the realm unhurt in any one of them.

VIII. 125. The part of generation, the belly, the tongue, the two hands, and, fifthly, the two feet, the eye, the nose, both ears, the property, and, in a capital case, the whole body. On the point of rights and duties relating to religious Sacraments and Sacrifices the views of Manu are noteworthy :

II. 28. By studying the Veda, by religious observances, by oblations to fire, by the ceremony of Traividya, by offering to the Gods and Manes, by the procreation of children, by the five great sacraments, and by solemn sacrifices, this human body is rendered fit for a divine state.

III. 69. For the sake of expiating offences committed ignorantly in those places mentioned in order, the five great sacraments were appointed by eminent sages to be performed each day by such as keep house.

III. 70. Teaching and studying the scripture is the sacrament of the Veda; offering cakes and water, the sacrament of the Manes; an oblation to fire, the

sacrament of the Deities ; giving rice or other food to living creatures, the sacrament of spirits ; receiving guests with honour, the sacrament of men.

III. 71. Whoever omits not those five great ceremonies, if he have ability to perform them, is untainted by the sins of the five slaughtering places, even though he constantly reside at home. Such are the ordinances of Manu. Laws are never complete enough to cover every point. There are always moot questions. Manu was conscious of this and provides for such contingencies.

XII. 108. If it be asked, how the law shall be ascertained, when particular cases are not comprised under any of the general rules, the answer is this : "That which well instructed Brahmens propound, shall be held incontestible law."

XII. 109. Well instructed Brahmens are they, who can adduce ocular proof from the scripture itself, having studied, as the law ordains, the Vedas and their extended branches, or Vedangas, Mimansa, Nyaya, Dharma, Shastra, Puranas.

XII. 113. Even the decision of one priest, if more cannot be assembled, who perfectly knows the principles of the Vedas, must be considered as law of the highest authority ; not the opinion of myriads, who have no sacred knowledge.

The Laws of Manu are eternal. Therefore there is no question of considering how changes could be effected in them. The only question Manu had to consider was the upholding and maintaining the system. Manu has laid down several provisions with this purpose in view.

As to the preservation of the Social Code, Manu has made it the duty of the King to uphold and maintain:

VIII. 410. The king should order each man of the mercantile class to practice trade, or money lending, or agriculture and attendance on cattle ; and each man of the servile class to act in the service of the twice-born.

VIII. 418. With vigilant care should the king exert himself in compelling merchants and mechanics to perform their respective duties ; for, when such men swerve from their duty, they throw this world into confusion.

Failure to maintain was made an offence in the King punishable at Law.

VIII. 335. Neither a father, nor a preceptor, nor a friend, nor a mother, nor a wife, nor a son, nor a domestic priest must be left unpunished by the king, if they adhere not with firmness to their duty.

VIII. 336. Where another man of lower birth would be fined one pana, the king shall be fined a thousand, and he shall give the fine to the priests, or cast it into the river, this is a sacred rule.

Failure to uphold and maintain the system on the part of the king involved a forfeiture of his right to rule. For Manu allows a right to rebel against such a King.

VIII. 348. The twice-born may take arms, when their duty is obstructed by force: and when, in some evil time. a disaster has befallen the twice-born classes.

The right of rebellion is given to the three higher classes and not to the Shudra. This is very natural. Because it is only the three upper classes who would benefit by the maintenance of this system. But supposing the Kshatriyas joined the King in destroying the system what is to be done? Manu gives the authority to the Brahmins to punish all and particularly the Kshatriyas.

XI. 31. A priest, who well knows the laws, need not complain to the king of any grievous injury; since, even by his own power, he may chastise those, who injure him.

XI. 32. His own power, which depends on himself alone, is mightier than the royal power, which depends on other men ; by his own might, therefore, may a Brahman coerce his foes.

XI. 33. He may use, without hesitation, the powerful charms revealed to Atharvan, and by him to Angiras ; for speech is the weapon of a Brahmen ; with that he may destroy his oppressors.

IX. 320. Of a military man, who raises his arm violently on all occasions against the priestly class, the priest himself shall be the chastiser; since the soldier originally proceeded from the Brahmen." How can the Brahmins punish the Kshatriyas unless they can take arms? Manu knows this and therefore allows the Brahmins to arm themselves to punish the Kshatriyas.

XII. 100. Command of armies, royal authority, power of inflicting punishment, and sovereign dominion over all nations, he only well deserves, who perfectly understands the Veda Shastra. So intent is Manu on the maintenance of the system of Chaturvarna that he did not hesitate to make this fundamental change in it. For to ask a Brahman to take up arms is a fundamental change as compared with the rule that was prevalent before Manu. The prohibition against Brahmin handling arms was very strict. In the Apastamba Dharma Sutras which is prior to Manu the rule is laid down in the following terms :

1.10, 29,6. A Brahmin shall not take up a weapon in his hand though he be only desirous of examining it." Successor of Manu—Baudhayana—improved upon him, and laid down in his Code of Laws :

II. 24, 18. For the protection of the Cows, Brahmins, or in the case of the confusion of Varnas, Brahmins and Vaisyas (also) should take up arms, out of consideration for the Dharma. and maintain the system at any cost.

## CHAPTER 9

## **Essays on the Bhagwat Gita : Philosophic Defence of Counter- Revolution: Krishna and His Gita**

*The first page of 'Essays on the Bhagwat Gita' is autographed by Dr. Ambedkar. Next 42 pages consist of analytical notes on Virat Parva and Uddyog Parva including the table of contents on this subject. The table of contents is printed in the schemes. This file contains two typed copies of an essay entitled 'Philosophic Defence of Counter-Revolution—Krishna and His Gita'. The last sentence of this essay is left incomplete. The total number of typed pages of this essay is 40 only. The notes on Virat Parva & Udyog Parva are printed in the next chapters.—Editors.*

What is the place of the Bhagwat Gita in the literature of ancient India? Is it a gospel of the Hindu Religion in the same way as the Bible is of the Christian Religion? The Hindus have come to regard it as their gospel. If it is a gospel, what does it really teach? What is the doctrine it stands for? The variety of answers given to this question by students competent to speak on the subject is really bewildering. Bohtlingk says:

" The Gita contains by the side of many high and beautiful thoughts, not only a few weak points ; contradictions (which the commentators have tried to pass over as excusable), repetitions, exaggerations, absurdities and loathsome points."

" Hopkins speaks of the Bhagvat Gita as a characteristic work of the Hindu Literature in its sublimity as in its puerilities, in its logic as in its want of it; ..... an ill-assorted cabinet of primitive philosophical opinions." In his judgment:

"Despite its occasional power and music exaltation, the Divine song in its present state as a poetical production is unsatisfactory. The same thing is said over again, and the contradictions in phraseology and in meaning are as numerous as the repetitions, so that one is not surprised to find it described as "the wonderful song, which causes the hair to stand on end."

Holtznansays:

"We have before us (in the Bhagvat Gita) a Vishnuite revision of a pantheistic poem."

Garbe observes :

"The whole character of the poem in its design and execution is preponderatingly theistic. A personal God Krishna stands forth in the form of a human hero, expounds his doctrine, enjoins, above all things, on his listener, along with the performance of his duties, loving faith in Him and self-surrender:..... And by the side of this God—who is) delineated as personally as possible, and who dominates the whole poem—stands out frequently the



impersonal neutral Brahman, the Absolute, as the highest principle. At one time Krishna says that He is the sole Highest God who has created the world and all beings and rules over it all ; at another time, he expounds the Vedantic doctrine of Brahman and *maya-the* Cosmic Illusion, and expounds as the highest goal of human being that he be freed from the World-Illusion and become Brahman. These two doctrines—the theistic and the pantheistic—are mixed up with each other, and follow each other, sometimes quite unconnected and sometimes loosely connected. And it is not the case that the one is represented as a lower, exoteric. (Text p. 9) and, (p. ) as the higher esoteric doctrine. It is nowhere taught that the Theism is a preliminary step to the knowledge of the reality or that it is its symbol, and that the pantheism of the Vedanta is the (ultimate) reality itself ; but the two beliefs are treated of almost throughout as though there was indeed no difference between them, either verbal or real." Mr. Telang says :

"There are several passages in the Gita which it is not very easy to reconcile with one another ; and no attempt is made to harmonise them. Thus, for example, in stanza 16 of Chapter VI I, Krishna divides his devotees into four classes, one of which consists of 'men of knowledge', whom, Krishna says, he considers 'as his own self'. It would probably be difficult to imagine any expression which could indicate higher esteem. Yet in stanza 46 of chapter VI, we have it laid down, that the devotee is superior not only to the mere performer of penances, but even to the men of knowledge. The commentators betray their gnostic bias by interpreting 'men of knowledge' in this latter passage to mean those who have acquired erudition in the Shastras and their significations. This is not an interpretation to be necessarily rejected. But there is in it a certain twisting of words, which, under the circumstances here, I am not inclined to accept. And on the other hand, it must not be forgotten, that the implications fairly derivable from Chapter IV, stanza 39 (pp. 62, 63), would seem to be rather than knowledge is superior to devotion—is the higher stage to be reached by means of devotion as the stepping stone. In another passage again at Gita, Chapter XII, stanza 12, concentration is preferred to knowledge, which also seems to me to be irreconcilable with Chapter VII, stanza 16. Take still another instance. At Gita, Chapter B stanza 15, it is said, that 'Lord receives the sin or merit of none.' Yet at Chapter V, stanza 24 Krishna calls himself the Lord and enjoyer," of all sacrifices and penances. How, it may be well asked, can the Supreme Being 'enjoy that which he does not even receive?' Once more at Chapter X, stanza 29, Krishna declares that 'none is hateful to me, none dear.' And yet the remarkable verse at the close of Chapter XII seem to stand in pointblank contradiction to that declaration. There through a most elaborate series of

stanzas, the burden of Krishna's eloquent sermon is 'such a one is dear to me.' And again in those fine verses, where Krishna winds up his Divine Law, he similarly tells Arjuna, that he, Arjuna, is 'dear' to Krishna. And Krishna also speaks of that devotee as 'dear' to him, who may publish the mystery of the Gita among those who references Supreme Being. And yet again, how are we to reconcile the same passage about none being 'hateful or dear' to Krishna, with his own words at Chapter XVI, stanza 18 and following stanzas? The language used in describing the 'demoniac' people there mentioned is not remarkable for sweetness towards them, while Krishna says positively, ' I hurl down such people into demoniac wombs, whereby they go down into misery and the vilest condition.' These persons are scarcely characterized with accuracy 'as neither hateful nor dear' to Krishna. It seems to me, that all these are real inconsistencies in the Gita, not such, perhaps, as might not be explained away, but such, I think, as indicate a mind making guesses at truth, as Professor Max Muller puts it, rather than a mind elaborating a complete and organized system of philosophy. There is not even a trace of consciousness on the part of the author that these inconsistencies exist. And the contexts of the various passages indicate, in my judgment, that a half-truth is struck out here and another half-truth there, with special reference to the special subject then under discussion; but no attempt is made to organize the various half-truths which are apparently incompatible, into a symmetrical whole, where the apparent inconsistencies might possibly vanish altogether in the higher synthesis."

These are the views of what might be called modern scholars. Turning to the view of the orthodox Pandits, we again find a variety of views. One view is that the Bhagvat is not a sectarian book. it pays equal respect to the three ways of salvation (1) Karma marga or the path of works (2) Bhakti marga or the path of devotion and (3) Jnana marga or the path of knowledge and preaches the efficacy of all three as means of salvation. In support of their contention that the Gita respects all the three ways of salvation and accepts the efficacy of each one of them, the Pandits point out that of the 18 Chapters of the Bhagvat Gita, Chapters 1 to 6 are devoted to the preaching of the Jnana marga, Chapters 7 to 12 to the preaching of Karma marga and Chapters 12 to 18 to the preaching of Bhakti marga and say that this equal distribution of its Chapters shows that the Gita upholds all the three modes of salvation.

Quite contrary to the view of the Pandits is the view of Shankaracharya and Mr. Tilak, both of whom must be classed amongst orthodox writers. Shankaracharya held the view that the Bhagvat Gita preached that the Jnana marga was the only true way of salvation. Mr. Tilak does not agree with the views of any of the other scholars. He repudiates the view that the Gita is a

bundle of inconsistencies. He does not agree with the Pandits who say that the Bhagvat Gita recognizes all the three ways of salvation. Like Shankaracharya he insists that the Bhagvat Gita has a definite doctrine to preach. But he differs from Shankaracharya and holds that the Gita teaches Karma Yoga and not Jnana Yoga.

It cannot but be a matter of great surprise to find such a variety of opinion as to the message which the Bhagvat Gita preaches. One is forced to ask why there should be such divergence of opinion among scholars? My answer to this question is that scholars have gone on a false errand. They have gone on a search for the message of the Bhagvat Gita on the assumption that it is a gospel as the Koran, the Bible or the Dhammapada is. In my opinion this assumption is quite a false assumption. The Bhagvat Gita is not a gospel and it can therefore have no message and it is futile to search for one. The question will no doubt be asked : What is the Bhagvat Gita if it is not a gospel? My answer is that the Bhagvat Gita is neither a book of religion nor a treatise on philosophy. What the Bhagvat Gita does is to defend certain dogmas of religion on philosophic grounds. If on that account anybody wants to call it a book of religion or a book of philosophy he may please himself. But essentially it is neither. It uses philosophy to defend religion. My opponents will not be satisfied with a bare statement of view. They would insist on my proving my thesis by reference to specific instances. It is not at all difficult. Indeed it is the easiest task.

The first instance one comes across in reading the Bhagvat Gita is the justification of war. Arjuna had declared himself against the war, against killing people for the sake of property. Krishna offers a philosophic defence of war and killing in war. This philosophic defence of war will be found in Chapter II verses 11 to 28. The philosophic defence of war offered by the Bhagvat Gita proceeds along two lines of argument. One line of argument is that anyhow the world is perishable and man is mortal. Things are bound to come to an end. Man is bound to die. Why should it make any difference to the wise whether man dies a natural death or whether he is done to death as a result of violence? Life is unreal, why shed tears because it has ceased to be? Death is inevitable, why bother how it has resulted ? The second line of argument in justification of war is that it is a mistake to think that the body and the soul are one. They are separate. Not only are the two quite distinct but they differ in-as-much as the body is perishable while the soul is eternal and imperishable. When death occurs it is the body that dies. The soul never dies. Not only does it never die but air cannot dry it, fire cannot burn it, and a weapon cannot cut it. It is therefore wrong to say that when a man is killed his soul is killed. What happens is that his body dies. His soul discards the dead

body as a person discards his old clothes—wears a new ones and carries on. As the soul is never killed, killing a person can never be a matter of any movement. War and killing need therefore give no ground to remorse or to shame, so argues the Bhagvat Gita.

Another dogma to which the Bhagvat Gita comes forward to offer a philosophic defence is Chaturvarnya. The Bhagvat Gita, no doubt, mentions that the Chaturvarnya is created by God and therefore sacrosanct. But it does not make its validity dependent on it. It offers a philosophic basis to the theory of Chaturvarnya by linking it to the theory of innate, inborn qualities in men. The fixing of the Varna of man is not an arbitrary act says the Bhagvat Gita. But it is fixed according to his innate, inborn qualities.

The third dogma for which the Bhagvat Gita offers a philosophic defence is the Karma marga. By Karma marga the Bhagvat Gita means the performance of the observances, such as Yajnas as a way to salvation. The Bhagvat Gita most stands out for the Karma marga throughout and is a great upholder of it. The line it takes to defend Karma yoga is by removing the excrescences which had grown upon it and which had made it appear quite ugly. The first excrescence was blind faith. The Gita tries to remove it by introducing the principle of Buddhi yoga as a necessary condition for Karma yoga. Become *Stihtaprajna* i.e., 'Befitted with Buddhi' there is nothing wrong in the performance of Karma kanda. The second excrescence on the Karma kanda was the selfishness which was the motive behind the performance of the Karmas. The Bhagvat Gita attempts to remove it by introducing the principle of *Anasakti* i.e., performance of karma without any attachment for the fruits of the *Karma*. Founded in Buddhi yoga and dissociated from selfish attachment to the fruits of Karma what is wrong with the dogma of Karma kanda? this is how the Bhagvat Gita defends the Karma marga.<sup>4</sup> It would be quite possible to continue in this strain, to pick up other dogmas and show how the Gita comes forward to offer a philosophic defence in their support where none existed before. But this could be done only if one were to write a treatise on the Bhagvat Gita. it is beyond the scope of a chapter the main purpose of which is to assign to the Bhagvat Gita its proper place in the ancient Indian literature. I have therefore selected the most important dogmas just to illustrate my thesis.

Two other questions are sure to be asked in relation to my thesis. Whose are the Dogmas for which the Bhagvat Gita offers this philosophical defence? Why did it become necessary for the Bhagvat Gita to defend these Dogmas?

To begin with the first question, the dogmas which the Gita defends are the dogmas of counter-revolution as put forth in the Bible of counter-revolution namely Jaimini's *Purvamimamsa*. There ought to be no difficulty in accepting

this proposition. If there is any it is largely due to wrong meaning attached to the word Karma yoga. Most writers on the Bhagvat Gita translate the word Karma yoga as 'action' and the word Janga yoga, as 'knowledge' and proceed to discuss the Bhagvat Gita as though it was engaged in comparing and contrasting knowledge versus action in a generalized form. This is quite wrong. The Bhagvat Gita is not concerned with any general, philosophical discussion of action versus knowledge. As a matter of fact, the Gita is concerned with the particular and not with the general. By Karma yoga or action Gita means the dogmas contained in Jaimini's Karma kanda and by Jnana yoga or knowledge it means the dogmas contained in Badarayana's Brahma Sutras. That the Gita in speaking of Karma is not speaking of activity or inactivity, quieticism or energism, in general terms but religious acts and observances cannot be denied by anyone who has read the Bhagvat Gita. It is to life the Gita from the position of a party pamphlet engaged in a controversy on small petty points and make it appear as though it was a general treatise on matters of high philosophy that this attempt is made to inflate the meaning of the words Karma and Jnana and make them words of general import. Mr. Tilak is largely to be blamed for this trick of patriotic Indians. The result has been that these false meanings have misled people into believing that the Bhagvat Gita is an independent self-contained book and has no relation to the literature that has preceded it. But if one were to keep to the meaning of the word Karma yoga as one finds it in the Bhagvat Gita itself one would be convinced that in speaking of Karma yoga the Bhagvat Gita is referring to nothing but the dogmas of Karma kanda as propounded by Jaimini which it tries to renovate and strengthen.

To take up the second question : Why did the Bhagvat Gita feel it necessary to defend the dogmas of counter-revolution? To my mind the answer is very clear. It was to save them from the attack of Buddhism that the Bhagvat Gita came into being. Buddha preached non-violence. He not only preached it but the people at large—except the Brahmins—had accepted it as the way of life. They had acquired a repugnance to violence. Buddha preached against Chaturvarnya. He used some of the most offensive similes in attacking the theory of Chaturvarnya. The frame work of Chaturvarnya had been broken. The order of Chaturvarnya had been turned upside down. Shudras and women could become sanniyasis, a status which counter-revolution had denied them. Buddha had condemned the Karma kanda and the Yajnas. he condemned them on the ground of *Himsa* or violence. He condemned them also on the ground that the motive behind them was a selfish desire to obtain bonus. What was the reply of the counterrevolutionaries to this attack? Only this. These things were ordained by the Vedas, the Vedas were infallible,

therefore the dogmas were not to be questioned. In the Buddhist age, which was the most enlightened and the most rationalistic age India has known, dogmas resting on such silly, arbitrary, unrationalistic and fragile foundations could hardly stand. People who had come to believe in non-violence as a principle of life and had gone so far as to make it a rule of life—How could they be expected to accept the dogma that the Kshatriya may kill without sinning because the Vedas say that it is his duty to kill? People who had accepted the gospel of social equality and who were remaking society on the basis of each one according to his merits—how could they accept the chaturvarnya theory of gradation, and separation of man based on birth simply because the Vedas say so? People who had accepted the doctrine of Buddha that all misery in society is due to Tanha or what Tawny calls acquisitive instinct—how could they accept the religion which deliberately invited people to obtain boons by sacrifices merely because there is behind it the authority of the Vedas? There is no doubt that under the furious attack of Buddhism, Jaimini's counter-revolutionary dogmas were tottering and would have collapsed had they not received the support which the Bhagvat Gita gave them. The philosophic defence of the counter-revolutionary doctrines given by the Bhagvat Gita is by no means impregnable. The philosophic defence offered by the Bhagvat Gita of the Kshatriya's duty to kill is to say the least puerile. To say that killing is no killing because what is killed is the body and not the soul is an unheard of defence of murder. This is one of the doctrines which make some people say that the doctrines make one's hair stand on their end. If Krishna were to appear as a lawyer acting for a client who is being tried for murder and pleaded the defence set out by him in the Bhagvat Gita there is not the slightest doubt that he would be sent to the lunatic asylum. Similarly childish is the defence of the Bhagvat Gita of the dogma of chaturvarnya. Krishna defends it on the basis of the Guna theory of the Sankhya. But Krishna does not seem to have realized what a fool he has made of himself. In the chaturvarnya there are four Varnas. But the gunas according to the Sankhyas are only three. How can a system of four varnas be defended on the basis of a philosophy which does not recognise more than three varnas? The whole attempt of the Bhagvat Gita to offer a philosophic defence of the dogmas of counterrevolution is childish—and does not deserve a moment's serious thought. None-the-less there is not the slightest doubt that without the help of the Bhagvat Gita the counter-revolution would have died out, out of sheer stupidity of its dogmas. Mischievous as it may seem, to the revolutionaries the part played by the Bhagvat Gita, there is no doubt that it resuscitated counter-revolution and if the counterrevolution lives even today, it is entirely due to the plausibility of the philosophic defence

which it received from the Bhagvat Gita— anti-Veda and anti-Yajna. Nothing can be a greater mistake than this. As will appear from other portions of the Bhagvat Gita that it is not against the authority of the vedas and shastras (XVI, 23, 24: XVII, I I, 13, 24). Nor is it against the sanctity of the yajnas (III. 9-15). It upholds the virtue of both.

There is therefore no difference between Jaimini's Purva Mimansa and the Bhagvat Gita. If anything, the Bhagvat Gita is a more formidable supporter of counter-revolution than Jaimini's Purva Mirnansa could have ever been. It is formidable because it seeks to give to the doctrines of counter-revolution that philosophic and therefore permanent basis which they never had before and without which they would never have survived. Particularly formidable than Jaimini's Purva Mimansa is the philosophic support which the Bhagvat Gita gives to the central doctrine of counterrevolution—namely Chaturvarnya. The soul of the Bhagvat Gita seems to be the defence of Chaturvarnya and securing its observance in practice, Krishna does not merely rest content with saying that Chaturvarnya is based on Guna-karma but he goes further and issues two positive injunctions.

The first injunction is contained in Chapter III verse 26. In this Krishna says: that a wise man should not by counter propaganda create a doubt in the mind of an ignorant person who is follower of Karma kand which of course includes the observance of the rules of Chaturvarnya. In other words, you must not agitate or excite people to rise in rebellion against the theory of Karma kand and all that it includes. The second injunction is laid down in Chapter XVIII verses 41-48. In this Krishna tells that every one do the duty prescribed for his Varna and no other and warns those who worship him and are his devotees that they will not obtain salvation by mere devotion but by devotion accompanied by observance of duty laid down for his Varna. In short, a Shudra however great he may be as a devotee will not get salvation if he has transgressed the duty of the Shudra—namely to live and die in the service of the higher classes. The second part of my thesis is that the essential function of the Bhagvat gita to give new support to Jaimini at least those portions of it which offer philosophic defence of Jaimini's doctrines—has become to be written after Jaimini's Purva Mimansa had been promulgated. The third part of my thesis is that this philosophic defence of the Bhagvat Gita, of the doctrines of couter-revolution became necessary because of the attack to which they were subjected by the revolutionary and rationalistic thought of Buddhism.

I must now turn to the objections that are likely to be raised against the validity of my thesis. I see one looming large before me. I shall be told that I am assuming that the Bhagvat Gita is posterior in time to Buddhism and to Jaimini's Purva Mimansa and that this asumption has no warrant behind it. I

am aware of the fact that my thesis runs counter to the most cherished view of Indian scholars all of whom, seem to be more concerned in fixing a very ancient date to the composition of the Bhagvat Gita far anterior to Buddhism and to Jaimini than in finding out what is the message of the Bhagvat Gita and what value it has as a guide to man's life. This is particularly the case with Mr. Telang and Mr. Tilak. But as Garbe observes "To Telang, as to every Hindu—how much so ever enlightened—it is an article of faith to believe in so high an antiquity of the Bhagvat Gita and where such necessities are powerful criticism indeed comes to an end." In the words of Prof. Garbe : -

"The task of assigning a date to the Gita has been recognized by every one who has earnestly tried to solve the problem, as being very difficult ; and the difficulties grow (all the more) if the problem is presented two fold, viz., to determine as well the age of the original Gita as also of its revision. I am afraid that generally speaking, we shall succeed in arriving, not at any certainties, but only at probabilities in this matter."

What are the probabilities? I have no doubt that the probabilities are in favour of my thesis. Indeed so far as I can see there is nothing against it. In examining this question, I propose first to advance direct evidence from the Gita itself showing that it has been composed after Jaimini's Purva Mimansa and after Buddhism.

Chapter III verses 9-13 of the Bhagvat Gita have a special significance. In this connection it is true that the Bhagvat Gita does not refer to Jaimini by name: nor does it mention Mimansa by name. But is there any doubt that in Chapter III verses 9-18 the Bhagvat Gita is dealing with the doctrines formulated by Jaimini in his Purva Mimansa? Even Mr. Tilak who believes in the antiquity of the Bhagvat Gita has to admit that here the Gita is engaged in the examination of the Purva Mimansa doctrines. There is another way of presenting this argument. Jaimini preaches pure and simple Karma yoga. The Bhagvat Gita on the other hand preaches *anasakti* karma. Thus the Gita preaches a doctrine which is fundamentally modified. Not only the Bhagvat Gita modifies the Karma yoga but attacks the upholders of pure and simple Karma yoga in somewhat severe terms. If the Gita is prior to Jaimini one would expect Jaimini to take note of this attack of the Bhagvat Gita and reply to it. But we do not find any reference in Jaimini to this *anasakti* karma yoga of the Bhagvat Gita.

Why? The only answer is that this modification came after Jaimini and not before—which is simply another way of saying that the Bhagvat Gita was composed after Jaimini's Purva Mimansa.

If the Bhagvat Gita does not mention Purva Mimansa it does mention by name the Brahma Sutras of Badarayana. This reference to Brahma Sutras is



a matter of great significance for it furnishes direct evidence for the conclusion that the Gita is later than the Brahma Sutras.

Mr. Tilak admits that the reference to the Brahma Sutras is a clear and definite reference to the treatise of that name which we now have. It may be pointed out that Mr. Telang discusses the subject in a somewhat cavalier fashion by saying that the treatise "Brahma Sutras" referred to in the Bhagvat Gita is different from the present treatise which goes by that name. He gives no evidence for so extraordinary a proposition but relies on the conjectural statement of Mr. Weber—given in a foot-note of his Treatise in Indian Literature, again without any evidence—that the mention of Brhma Sutras in the Bhagvat Gita "may be taken as an appellative rather than as a proper name." It would not be fair to attribute any particular motives to Mr. Telang for the view he has taken on this point. But there is nothing unfair in saying that Mr. Telang shied at admitting the reference to Brahma Sutra because he saw that Weber had on the authority of Winternitz assigned 500 A.D. to the composition of the Brahma Sutras, which would have destroyed his cherished theory regarding the antiquity of the Bhagvat Gita. There is thus ample internal evidence to support the conclusion that the Gita was composed after Jaimini's Purva Mimansa and Badarayana's Brahma Sutras.

Is the Bhagvat Gita anterior to Buddhism? the question was raised by Mr. Telang:

"We come now to another point. What is the position of the Gita in regard to the great reform of Sakya Muni? The question is one of much interest, having regard particularly to the remarkable coincidences between Buddhistic doctrines and the doctrines of the Gita to which we have drawn attention in the footnotes to our translation. But the materials for deciding the question are unhappily not forth coming. Professor Wilson, indeed, thought that there was an allusion to Buddhism in the Gita. but his idea was based on a confusion between the Buddhists and the Charvakas or materialists. Failing that allusion, we have nothing very tangible but the unsatisfactory 'negative argument' based on mere non-mention of Buddhism in the Gita. That argument is not quite satisfactory to my own mind, although, as I have elsewhere pointed out, some of the ground occupied by the Gita is common to it with Buddhism, and although various previous thinkers are alluded to directly or indirectly in the Gita. There is, however, one view of the facts of this question, which appears to me to corroborate the conclusion deducible by means of the negative argument here referred to. The main points on which Buddha's protest against Brahmanism rests, seem to be the true authority of the Vedas and the true view of the differences of caste. On most points of doctrinal speculation, Buddhism is still but one aspect of the older

Brahmanism. The various coincidences to which we have drawn attention show that, if there is need to show it. Well now, on both these points, the Gita, while it does not go the whole length which Buddha goes, itself embodies a protest against the views current about the time of its composition. The Gita does not, like Buddhism, absolutely reject the Vedas, but it shelves them. The Gita does not totally root out caste. It places caste on a less untenable basis. One of two hypothesis therefore presents itself as a rational theory of these facts. Either the Gita and Buddhism were alike the outward manifestation of one and the same spiritual upheaval which shook to its centre the current religion, the Gita being the earlier and less thorough going form of it ; or Buddhism having already begun to tell on Brahmanism, the Gita was an attempt to bolster it up, so to say, at its least weak points, the weaker ones being altogether abandoned. I do not accept the latter alternative, because I cannot see any indication in the Gita of an attempt to compromise with a powerful attack on the old Hindu system while the fact that, though strictly orthodox, the author of the Gita still undermines the authority, as unwisely venerated, of the Vedic revelation; and the further fact, that in doing this, he is doing what others also had done before him or about his time ; go, in my opinion, a considerable way towards fortifying the results of the negative argument already set forth. To me Buddhism is perfectly intelligible as one outcome of that play of thought on high spiritual topics, which in its other, and as we may say, less thorough going, manifestation we see in the Upanishads and the Gita."

I have quoted this passage in full because it is typical of all Hindu scholars. Everyone of them is most reluctant to admit that the Bhagvat Gita is anyway influenced by Buddhism and is ever ready to deny that the Gita has borrowed anything from Buddhism. It is the attitude of Prof. Radhakrishnan and also of Tilak. Where there is any similarity in thought between the Bhagvat Gita and Buddhism too strong and too close to be denied, the argument is that it is borrowed from the Upanishads. It is typical of the mean mentality of the counterrevolutionaries not to allow any credit to Buddhism on any account.

The absurdity of these views must shock all those who have made a comparative study of the Bhagvat Gita and the Buddhist Suttas. For if it is true to say that Gita is saturated with Sankhya philosophy it is far more true to say that the Gita is full of Buddhist ideas. The similarity between the two is not merely in ideas but also in language. A few illustrations will show how true it is.

The Bhagvat Gita discusses Bramha-Nirvana. The steps by which one reaches Bramha. Nirvana are stated by the Bhagvat Gita to be (1) Shraddha (Faith in oneself); (2) Vyavasaya (Firm determination); (3) Smriti

(Rememberance of the goal); (4) Samadhi (Earnest contemplation) and (5) Prajna (Insight or True Knowledge). From where has the Gita borrowed this Nirvana theory? Surely it is not borrowed from the Upanishads. For no Upanishad even mentions the word Nirvana. The whole idea is peculiarly Buddhist and is borrowed from Buddhism. Anyone who has any doubt on the point may compare this Bramha-Nirvana of the Bhagvat Gita with the Buddhist conception of Nirvana as set out in the Mahapari-nibbana Sutta, It will be found that they are the same which the Gita has laid down for Bramha-Nirvana. Is it not a fact that the Bhagvat Gita has borrowed the entire conception of Brmhma Nirvana instead of Nirvana for no other reason except to conceal the fact of its having stolen it from Buddhism?

Take another illustration. In Chapter VII verses 13-20 there is a discussion as to who is dear to Krishna; one who has knowledge, or one who performs karma or one who is a devotee. Krishna says that the Devotees is dear to him but adds that he must have the true marks of a Devotee. What is the character of a true Devotee? According to Krishna the true devotee is one who practices (1) Maitri; (loving Kindness); (2) Karuna (compassion); (3) Mudita (sympathizing joy) and (4) Upeksha (unconcernedness). From where has the Bhagvate Gita borrowed these qualifications of a perfect Devotee? Here again, the source is Buddhism. Those who want proof may compare the Mahapadana Sutta, and the Tevijja Sutta where Buddha has preached what Bhavanas (mental attitude) are necessary for one to cherish for the training of the heart. This comparison will show that the whole ideology is borrowed from Buddhism and that too word for word.

Take a third illustration. In chapter XIII the Bhagvat Gita descusses the subject of Kshetra-Kshetrajna. In verses 7-11 Krishna points out what is knowledge and what is ignorance in the following language:

"Pridelessness (Humility), Unpretentiousness, Non-injury or Harmlessness, Forgiveness, Straight-forwardness, (uprightness), Devotion to Preceptor, Purity, Steadiness, Self-restraint, Desirelessness towards objects of sense, absence of Egoism, Reflection on the suffering and evil of Birth, Death, decrepitude and disease, Non-attachment, Non-identification of oneself with regard to son, wife and home and the rest, Constant even-mindedness on approach of both (what is) agreeable and (what is) disagreeable unswerving devotion to Me with undivided meditation of Me, Resort to sequestered spots (contemplation, concentration, in solitude), Distaste for the society of worldly men, Incessant application to the knowledge relating to self, Perception or realisation of the true purport of the knowledge of the Tattvas (Samkhya Philosophy), all this is called 'knowledge'; what is Ajnana (Ignorance) which is the reverse thereof." Can anyone who knows anything of the Gospel of

Buddha deny that the Bhagvat Gita has not in these stanzas reproduced word for word the main doctrines of Buddhism?

In chapter XIII verses 5, 6, 18, 19, the Bhagvat Gita gives a new metaphorical interpretation of karmas under various heads (1) Yajnas (sacrifices); (2) Dana (Gifts); (3) Tapas (penances); (4) Food and (5) Svadhyaya (Vedic study). What is the source of this new interpretation of old ideas ? Compare with this what Buddha is reported to have said in the Majjhina Nikaya 1, 286 Sutta XVI. Can anyone doubt that what Krishna says in verses 5,6, 18, 19 of chapter XVII is a verbatim reproduction of the words of Buddha?

These are only a few illustrations I have selected those of major doctrinal importance. Those who are interested in pursuing the subject may take up the reference to similarities between Gita and Buddhism given by Telang in the footnotes to his edition of the Bhagvat Gita and satisfy their curiosity. But the illustrations I have given will be enough to show how greatly the Bhagvat Gita is permeated by Buddhistic ideology and how much the Gita has borrowed from Buddhism. To sum up the Bhagvat Gita seems to be deliberately modelled on Buddhist Suttas. The Buddhist Suttas are dialogues. So is the Bhagvat Gita. Buddha's religion offered salvation to women and Shudras. Krishna also comes forward to offer salvation to women and Shudras. Buddhists say, "I surrender to Buddha, to Dhamma and to Sangha." So Krishna says, "Give up all religions and surrender unto Me." No parallel can be closer than what exists between Buddhism and Bhagvat Gita.

#### IV

I have shown that Gita is later than Purva Mimansa and also later than Buddhism. I could well stop here. But I feel I cannot. For there still remains one argument against my thesis which requires to be answered. It is the argument of Mr. Tilak. It is an ingenious argument. Mr. Tilak realizes that there are many similarities in ideas and in words between the Bhagvat Gita and Buddhism. Buddhism being earlier than the Bhagvat Gita, the obvious conclusion is that the Bhagvat Gita is the debtor and Buddhism is the creditor. This obvious conclusion is not palatable to Mr. Tilak or for the matter of that to all upholders of counter-revolution. With them it is a question of honour that counter-revolution should not be shown to be indebted to Revolution. To get over this difficulty Mr. Tilak has struck a new line. He points out the distinction between Hinayana Buddhism and Mahayana Buddhism and say, that Mahayana Buddhism was later than Bhagvat Gita and if there are any similarities between the Buddhism and Bhagvat Gita it is due to the borrowing by the Mahayanist from the Bhagvat Gita. This raises two questions. What is the date of the origin of the Mahayana Buddhism? What is the date of the

composition of the Bhagvat Gita? The argument of Mr. Tilak is ingenious and clever. But it has no substance. In the first place, it is not original. It is based on certain casual remarks made by Winternitz and by Kern in foot-notes that there are certain similarities between the Bhagvat Gita and the Mahayan Buddhism and that these similarities are the result of Mahayana Buddhism borrowing its ideas from the Bhagvat Gita. Behind these remarks there is no evidence of special research either on the part of Winternitz, Kern or Mr. Tilak. All of them seem to be led away by the assumption that the Bhagvat Gita is earlier than Mahayana Buddhism.

This leads me to examine the question of the date of the Bhagvat Gita particularly with reference to the theory as put forth by Mr. Tilak. Mr. Tilak is of opinion that the Gita is part of the Mahabharata and that both have been written by one and the same author named Vyasa and consequently the date of the Mahabharata must be the date of the Bhagvat Gita. The Mahabharata, Mr. Tilak argues, must have been written at least 500 years before the Shaka Era on the ground that the stories contained in the Mahabharata were known to Megasthenes who was in India about 300 B.C. as a Greek ambassador to the court of Chandragupta Maurya. The Shaka Era began in 78 A.D. On this basis it follows that the Bhagvat Gita must have been composed before 422 B.C. This is his view about the date of the composition of the present Gita. According to him, the original Gita must have been some centuries older than Mahabharata. If reliance be placed on the tradition referred to in the Bhagvat Gita that the religion of the Bhagvat Gita was taught by Nara to Narayan in very ancient times. Mr. Tilak's theory as to the date of the composition of the Mahabharata is untenable. In the first place, it assumes that the whole of the Bhagvat Gita and the whole of Mahabharat have been written at one stretch, at one time and by one hand. There is no warrant for such an assumption, either in tradition, or in the internal evidence of these two treatises. Confining the discussion to the Mahabharata the assumption made by Mr. Tilak is quite opposed to well-known Indian traditions. This tradition divides the composition of the Mahabharata into three stages; (1) Jaya (2) Bharata and (3) Mahabharata and assigns to each part a different author. According to this tradition Vyasa was the author of the 1st edition so to say of the Mahabharata called 'Jaya'. Of the Second Edition called 'Bharata' tradition assigns the authorship to Vaishampayana and that of the Third Edition called Mahabharata to 'Sauti'. That this tradition is well-founded has been confirmed by the researches of Prof. Hopkins based on the examination of internal evidence furnished by the Mahabharata. According to Prof. Hopkins there have been several stages in the composition of the Mahabharata. As has been pointed out by Prof. Hopkins in the first stage it was just a Pandu Epic

consisting of plays and legends about heroes who took part in the Mahabharata war without the masses of didactic material. Such a Mahabharata, says Prof. Hopkins, may have come into existence between 400-200 B.C. The second stage was the remaking of the epic by the inclusion of didactic matter and the addition of Puranic material. This was between 200 B.C. and 200 A.D. The third stage is marked when (1) the last books were added to the composition as it stood at the end of the second stage with the introduction of the first book and (2) the swollen Anushasana Parva was separated from Shanti Parva and recognized as a separate book. This happened between 200 to 400 A.D. To these three stages Prof. Hopkins adds a fourth or a final stage of occasional amplification which started from 400 A.D. onwards. In coming to this conclusion Prof. Hopkins has anticipated and dealt with all the arguments advanced by Mr. Tilak such as the mention of Mahabharata in Panini and in the Grihyasutras. The only new pieces of evidence produced by Mr. Tilak which has not been considered by Prof. Hopkins are two. One such piece of evidence consists of the statements which are reported to have been recorded by Megasthenes' the Greek Ambassador to the court of Chandra Gupta Maurya, and the other is the astronomical evidence, in the Adi Parva which refers to the Uttarayana starting with the Shravana constellation. The facts adduced by Mr. Tilak as coming from Megasthenes may not be denied and may go to prove that at the time of Megasthenes i.e., about 300 B.C. a cult of Krishna worship had come into existence among the Sauraseni community. But how can this prove that the Mahabharata had then come into existence? It cannot. Nor can it prove that the legends and stories mentioned by Megasthenes were taken by him from the Mahabharata. For there is nothing to militate against the view that these legends and stories were a floating mass of Saga and that it served as a reservoir both to the writer of the Mahabharata as well as to Greek Ambassador.

Mr. Tilak's astronomical evidence may be quite sound. He is right in saying that "it is stated in the Anugita that Visvamitra started the enumeration of the constellation with Shravana (Ma.Bha.Asva.44.2, and Adi.71.34). That has been interpreted by commentators as showing that the Uttarayana then started with the Shravana constellation, and no other interpretation is proper. At the date of the Vedanga-Jyotisa, the Uttarayana used to start with the Sun in the Dhanistha constellation. According to astronomical calculations, the date when the Uttarayana should start with the Sun in the Dhanistha constellation to about 1,500 years before the Saka era; and according to astronomical calculations, it takes about a thousand years for the Uttarayana to start one constellation earlier. According to this calculation, the date when

the Uttarayana ought to start with the Sun in the Shravana constellation comes to about 500 years before the Saka era. This conclusion would have been proper if it was true that the Mahabharata was one whole piece, written at one time by one author. It has, however, been shown that there is no warrant for such an assumption. In view of this Mr. Tilak's astronomical evidence cannot be used to determine the date of the Mahabharata. It can be used only to determine the date of that part of the Mahabharata which is affected by it—in this case the Adi Parva of the Mahabharata. For these reasons Mr. Tilak's theory as to the date of the composition of the Mahabharata must fall to the ground. Indeed any attempt to fix a single date for a work like the Mahabharata which is a serial story produced in parts at long intervals must be regarded as futile. All that one can say is that the Mahabharata was composed between 400B.C. to 400A.D. a conclusion too broad to be used for the purpose which Mr. Tilak has in view. Even this span seems to some scholars to be too narrow. It is contended that the reference to *Edukas* in the 190th Adhyaya of the Vanaparva has been wrongly interpreted to mean Buddhist Stupas when, as a matter of fact, it refers to the *Idgahas* created by the Muslim invaders for Muslim converts. If this interpretation is correct it would show that parts of the Mahabharata were written about or after the invasions of Mohammed Ghori.

Let me now turn to examine Mr. Tilak's theory as to the date of the composition of the Bhagvat Gita. There are really two propositions underlying his theory. First is that the Gita is part of the Mahabharata, both are written at one time and are the handiwork of one man. His second proposition is that the Bhagvat Gita has been the same what it is today from the very beginning when it first came to be written. To avoid confusion I propose to take them separately.

Mr. Tilak's object in linking the Gita with the Mahabharata in the matter of its composition is quite obvious. It is to have the date of the Mahabharata which he thinks is known to determine the date of the Bhagvat Gita which is unknown. The basis on which Mr. Tilak has tried to establish an integral connection between the Mahabharata and the Bhagvat Gita is unfortunately the weakest part of his theory. To accept that the Gita is a part of the Mahabharata because the author of both is Vyasa- and this is the argument of Mr. Tilak—is to accept a fiction for a fact. It assumes that Vyasa is the name of some particular individual capable of being identified. This is evident from the fact that we have Vyasa as the author of the Mahabharata, Vyasa as the author of the Puranas, Vyasa as the author of Bhagvat Gita and Vyasa as the author of the Bramha Sutras. It cannot therefore be accepted as true that the same Vyasa is the author of all these works separated as they are by a

long span of time extending to several centuries. It is well-known how orthodox writers wishing to hide their identity get better authority for their works by the use of a revered name were in the habit of using Vyasa as a nom-de-plume or pen name. If the author of the Gita is a Vyasa he must be a different Vyasa. There is another argument which seems to militate against Mr. Tilak's theory of synchronicity between the composition of the Bhagvat Gita and the Mahabharata. The Mahabharata consists of 18 Parvas. There are also 18 Puranas. It is curious to find that Bhagvat Gita has also 18 Adhyayas. The question is : Why should there be this parallelism? The answer is that the ancient Indian writers regarded certain names and certain numbers as invested with great sanctity. The name Vyasa and the number 18 are illustrations of this fact. But there is more in the fixation of 18 as the chapters of the Bhagvat Gita than is apparent on the face of it. Who set 18 as the sacred number, the Mahabharata or the Gita? If the Mahabharata, then Gita must have been written after the Mahabharata. If it is the Bhagvat Gita, then the Mahabharata must have been written after the Gita. In any case, the two could not have been written at one and the same time.

These considerations may not be accepted as decisive against Mr. Tilak's first proposition. But there is one which I think is decisive. I refer to the relative position of Krishna in the Mahabharata and in the Bhagvat Gita. In the Mahabharata, Krishna is nowhere represented as a God accepted by all. The Mahabharata itself shows the people were not prepared even to give him the first place. When at the time of the Rajasuya Yajna, Dharma offered to give Krishna priority in the matter of honouring the guest, Shishupala—the near relation of Krishna—protested and abused Krishna. He not only charged him with low origin, but also with loose morals, an intriguer who violated rules of war for the sake of victory. So abhorrent but so true was this record of Krishna's foul deeds that when Duryodhan flung them in the face of Krishna, the Mahabharata itself in the Gada Parva records that the Gods in heaven came out to listen to the charges made by Duryodhan against Krishna and after listening showered flowers as a token of their view that the charges contained the whole truth and nothing but the truth. On the other hand, the Bhagvat Gita presented Krishna as God omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, pure, loving, essence of goodness. Two such works containing two quite contradictory estimates about one and the same personality could not have been written at one and the same time by one and the same author. It is a pity that Mr. Tilak in his anxiety to give a pre-Buddhist date to the composition of the Bhagvat Gita should have completely failed to take note of these important considerations.



The second proposition of Mr. Tilak is equally unsound. The attempt to fix a date for the composition of the Bhagvat Gita is nothing but the pursuit of a mirage. It is doomed to failure. The reason is that the Bhagvat Gita is not a single book written by a single author. It consists of different parts written at different times by different authors.

Prof. Garbe is the only scholar who has seen the necessity of following this line of inquiry. Prof. Garbe hold that there are two parts of the Bhagvat Gita one original and one added. I am not satisfied with this statement. My reading of the Bhagvat Gita leads me to the conclusion that there have been four separate parts of Bhagvat Gita. They are so distinct that taking even the present treatise as it stands they can be easily marked off.

(i) The original Gita was nothing more than a heroic tale told or a ballad recited by the bards of how Arjuna was not prepared to fight and how Krishna forced him to engage in battle, how Arjuna yielded and so on. It may have been a romantic story but there was nothing religious or philosophical in it.

This original Gita will be found embedded in Chapter I, Chapter II, verses.. . . and Chapter XI verses 32-33 in which Krishna is reported to have ended the argument:

" Be my tool, carry out my will, don't worry about sin and evil resulting from fighting, do as I tell you, don't be impudent.". This is the argument which Krishna used to compel Arjuna to fight. And this argument of coercion and compulsion made Arjuna yield. Krishna probably threatened Arjuna with brute force if he did not actually use it. The assumption of Vishva-rupa by Krishna is only different way of describing the use of brute force. On that theory it is possible that the chapter in the present Bhagvat Gita dealing with Vishva-rupa is also a part of the original Bhagvat Gita.

(ii) The first patch on the original Bhagvat Gita is the part in which Krishna is spoken of as Ishvara. the God of the Bhagvat religion. This part of the Gita is embedded in those verses of the present Bhagvat Gita which are devoted to Bhakti Yoga.

(iii) The second patch on the original Bhagvat Gita is the part which introduces the Sankhya and the Vedanta philosophy as a defence to the doctrines of Purva Mimansa which they did not have before. The Gita was originally only a historical Saga with the cult of Krishna came to be interwoven. The Philosophy portion of the Bhagvat Gita was a later intrusion can be proved quite easily from the nature of the original dialogue and the sequence of it.

In chapter I verses 20-47 Arjuna mentions those difficulties. In chapter II Krishna attempts to meet the difficulties mentioned by Arjuna. There are arguments and counter arguments. Krishna's first argument is contained in

verse 2 and 3 in which Krishna tells Arjuna that his conduct is infamous, unbecoming an Arya and that he should not play the part of an effeminate which was unworthy of him. To this, Arjuna gives a reply which is embodied in verses 4 to 8. In verses 4 to 5 he says, "how can I kill Bhishma and Drona who are entitled to highest reverence: it would be better to live by begging than kill them. I do not wish to live to enjoy a kingdom won by killing old revered elders. " In verses 6 to 8 Arjuna says: "I do not know which of the two is more meritorious, whether we should vanquish the Kauravas or whether we should be vanquished by them. "Krishna's reply to this is contained in verses 11 to 39 in which he propounds (i) that grief is unjustified because things are imperishable, (ii) that it is a false view that a man is killed when the atman is eternal and (iii) that he must fight because it is the duty of the Kshatriya to fight. Any one who reads the dialogue will notice the following points:

(1) The questions put by Arjuna are *not* philosophical questions. They are natural questions put by a worldly man faced with worldly problems.

(2) Upto a point Krishna treats them as natural questions and returns to them quite natural replies.

(3) The dialogue takes a new turn. Arjuna after having informed Krishna positively and definitely that he will not fight, suddenly takes a new turn and expresses a doubt whether it is a good to kill the Kauravas or be killed by them. This is a deliberate departure designed to give Krishna a philosophical defence of war, uncalled for by anything said by Arjuna.

(4) Again there is a drop in the tone of Krishna from verses 31 to 38. He treats the question as natural and tells him to fight because it is the duty of the Kshatriya to fight.

Anyone can see from this that the introduction of the Vedanta philosophy is quite unnatural and therefore a later intrusion. With regard to the introduction of the Sankhya philosophy the case is quite obvious. Often it is expounded without any question by Arjuna and whenever it has been propounded in answer to a question that question has nothing to do with the war. This shows that the philosophic parts of the Bhagvat Gita are not parts of the original Gita but have been added later on and in order to find a place for them, new, appropriate and leading questions have been put in the mouth of Arjuna which have nothing to do with the mundane problems of war.

(iv) The third patch on the original Bhagvat Gita consists of verses in which Krishna is elevated from the position of Ishwara to that of Parmeshwara. This patch can be easily detected as being chapters X and XV where Krishna says: (Quotation not mentioned) ..... As I said, to go in for a precise date for the composition of the Bhagvat Gita is to go on a fool's errand and that if an attempt in that direction is to be of any value, effort must be directed to

determine the date of each patch separately. Proceeding in this way it is possible that what I have called the original unphilosophic Bhagvat Gita was part of the first edition of the Mahabharata called Jaya. The first patch on the original Bhagvat Gita in which Krishna is depicted as Ishvara must be placed in point of date sometimes later than Megasthenes when Krishna was only a tribal God. How much later it is not possible to say. But it must be considerably later. For it must be remembered that the Brahmins were not friendly to Krishnaism in the beginning. In fact they were opposed to it. It must have taken some time before the Brahmins could have become reconciled to Krishna worship.

The second patch on the original Bhagvat Gita, having reference to Sankhya and Vedanta must for reason already given be placed later than the Sutras of Jaimini and Badarayana. The question of the date of these Sutras has carefully been examined by Prof. Jacobi. His conclusion is that these Sutras were composed sometime between 200 and 450 A.D.

The third patch on the original Bhagvat Gita in which Krishna is raised into Parmeshvara must be placed during the reign of the Gupta Kings. The reason is obvious. Gupta kings made Krishna-Vasudev their family deity as their opponents the Shaka kings had made Mahadeo their family deity. The Brahmins to whom religion has been a trade, who were never devoted to one God but came forward to worship the deity of the ruling race thought of pleasing their masters by making their family deity into a high and mighty Parmeshvar. If this is correct explanation then this patch on the original Bhagvat Gita must be placed between 400 and 464 A.D.

All this goes to confirm the view that the attempt to place the Bhagvat Gita prior in point of time to Buddhism cannot succeed. It is the result of wishful thinking on the part of those who have inherited a positive dislike to Buddha and his revolutionary gospel. History does not support it. History proves quite abnormally that at any rate those portions of the Bhagvat Gita which have any doctrinal value are considerably later in point of time to the Buddhist canon and the Sutras of Jaimini and Badarayana.

The discussion of the dates not only proves that the Bhagvat Gita is later than Hinayana Buddhism but is also later than Mahayana Buddhism. The impression prevails that Mahayana Buddhism is later in origin. It is supposed to have come into being after A.D. 100 when Kanishka held the third Buddhist Council to settle the dissension in the Buddhist Church. This is absolutely a mistake. It is not true that after the Council a new creed of Buddhism came into existence. What happened is that new names of abuse came into existence for parties which were very old. As Mr. Kimura has shown the Mahayanist is simply another name for the sect of Buddhists known as

Mahasanghikas. The sect of Mahasanghikas had come into being very much earlier than is supposed to be the case. If tradition be believed the sect had come into being at the time of the First Buddhist Council held at Pataliputra 236 years after the death of Buddha i.e., 307 B.C for settling the Buddhist canon and is said to have led the opposition to the Theravad sect of Buddhism which later on came to be stigmatized as Hinayana (which means those holding to the low path). There could hardly be any trace of Bhagvat Gita when the Mahasanghikas later known as Mahayanists came into being.

Apart from this what have the Mahayanists borrowed from the Bhagvat Gita? Indeed what can they borrow from the Bhagvat Gita? As Mr. Kimura points out the doctrine of every school of Buddhism is mainly concerned at least with three doctrines: (1) Those which deal with cosmic existence; (2) Those which deal with Buddhology; and (3) Those which deal with conception of human life. Mahayana is no exception to this. Except probably on Buddhology the Mahayanists could hardly use the Bhagvat Gita to draw upon. So different is the approach of the two on the other doctrines and even this possibility is excluded by the factor of time.

The foregoing discussion completely destroys the only argument that could be urged against my thesis—namely that the Bhagvat Gita is very ancient, pre-Buddhistic in origin and therefore could not be related to Jaimini's Purva Mimansa and treated as an attempt to give a philosophic defence of his counter-revolutionary doctrines.

To sum up, my thesis is three-fold. In other words it has three parts. First is that the Bhagvat Gita is fundamentally a counter-revolutionary treatise of the same class as Jamini's Purva Mimansa—the official Bible of counter-revolution. Some writers relying on verses 40-46 of Chapter II hold the view that the Bhagvat Gita is

*{In all the copies available with us, the essay has been left here incomplete, as is seen from the above sentence—Editors.}*

## CHAPTER 10

### Analytical Notes of Virat Parva & Udyog Parva

#### VIRAT PARVA

1. The spies sent by Kauravas to search for the existence of the Pandavas return to Duryodhan and tell him that they are unable to discover them. They ask his permission as to what to do Virat Parva, Adhya. 25.

2. Duryodhan asks for advice from his advisers. Kama said send other spies. Dushasan said they might have gone beyond the sea. But search for them.—*Ibid.* —Adhya. 26.

3. Drona said the Pandavas are not likely to be defeated or destroyed. They may be living as Tapasis. therefore send Siddhas and Brahamins as spies— *Ibid*. Adhya 27.

4. Bhishma supports Drona—*Ibid* Adhya. 28.

5. Kripacharya supported Bhishma and added—Pandavas are great enemies. But wise man does not neglect even small enemies. While they are in *Agnyatavasa* you should go on collecting armies from now.— *Ibid* Adhya. 29.

6. Then Susharma King of Trigarth raised quite a different subject. He said that *Kichaka* who was the *Senapati* of King Virat I hear dead, King Virat is to give us great trouble. Kichaka having been dead Virat must have become very weak. Why not invade the Kingdom of Virat? This is the most opportune time. Kama also supported Susharma. Why worry about the Pandavas, these Pandavas are without wealth, without army and fallen. Why bother with them? They might have even been dead by now. Give up the search and let undertake the project of Susharma—*Ibid* Adhya. 30.

7. Susharma's invasion of Virat. Susharma carries away the cows of Virat. The cow herds go and inform Virat of this and ask him to pursue Susharma and rescue the cows.—*Ibid* Adhya. 31.

8. Virat became ready for war. In the meanwhile *Shatanik* the younger brother of Virat suggested that instead of going alone he might take with him Kank (Sahadeo) Ballava (Yudhishtira) Santipal (Bhima) and Granthik (Nakula) to help him to fight Susharma. Virat agreed and they all went—*Ibid*. Adhya. 31.

9. War between Shusharma and Virat—*Ibid* Adhya. 32.

10. Yudhishtira rescues Virat.—*Ibid*. Adhya. 33.

11. Announcement in the Virat Nagari that their King is safe.— *Ibid* Adhya. 34.

### **ENTRY IN VIRAT NAGARI BY KAURVAS**

12. While King Virat went after Susharman Duryodhan with *Bhishma*, *Drona*, *Kama*, *Krapa*, *Ashvashtama*, *Shakuni*, *Dushashana*, *Vivinshati*, *Vikarna*, *Chitrasen*, *Durmukha*, *Dushala* and other warriors entered the Virat Nagari and captured the cows of Virat and were going away. The cowherds came to the palace of King Virat and gave the news. They need not find the King but they found his son *Uttar*. so they gave him the news.—*Ibid* Adhya. 35.

13. *Uttar* began to boast saying he was superior to Arjuna and would do the job. But his complaint was that there was no one to act his *Sarathi*. *Draupadi* went and told him that *Brahannada* was at one time the *Sarathi* of Arjuna.

Why not ask him? He said he had no courage and requested Draupadi to make the request. Why not ask your younger sister *Manorama*. So he told Manorama to bring Brahannada—*Ibid Adhya. 36.*

14. Manorama takes Brahannada to his brothers and Uttara persuades him to be his Sarathi. Brahannada agreed and took the Rath of Uttara in front of the Kauravas—*Ibid. Adhya. 37.*

15. On seeing the army of the Kauravas Uttara left the Rath and started running away. Arjuna stopped him. The Kauravas seeing this began to suspect that the man might be Arjuna. Arjuna told him not to be afraid—*Ibid Adhya. 38.*

16. Arjuna took his Ratha to the Shami tree. Seeing this Drona said he must be Arjuna. Hearing this the Kauravas were greatly upset. But Duryodhana said if Drona is right it is good for us. Because it is before the thirteenth year that the Pandavas will have been discovered and they will have to suffer Vanavas again for 12 years.—*Ibid Adhya. 39.*

17. Arjuna asks Uttara to climb the Shami tree and to take down the weapons.—*Ibid Adhya. 40.*

18. Uttara's doubts about the corpse on the Shami *Tree*—*Ibid Adhya. 41.*

19. Uttara's excitement after seeing the weapons—*Ibid Adhya. 42.*

20. Arjuna's description of the weapons.—*Ibid Adhya. 43.*

21. Uttara's Inquiry regarding the whereabouts about the Pandavas.—*Ibid Adhya. 44.*

22. Climbing down of Uttara from the tree—*Ibid Adhya. 45.*

23. The Rath with Vanar Symbol. Drona becomes sure that he is Arjuna. Bad omens seen by the army of the Kauravas.—*Ibid Adhya. 46.*

24. Duryodhan encourages the soldiers who were frightened by Drona's saying that it was Arjuna. Kama's slander of Drona and proposal to Duryodhan to remove Drona as a Commander-in-Chief.— *Ibid Adhya. 47.*

25. Boasting by Kama and Pratijna to defeat Arjuna— *Ibid Adhya. 48.*

26. Krapacharya's admonition to Kama not to brag and boast. War is regarded as bad by the Shastras—*Ibid Adhya. 49.*

27. Ashvasthama abuses Kama and Duryodhan because of their slander of Drona—*Ibid Adhya. 50.*

28. Ashavashthama abused Kama and Duryodhan for speaking ill of Drona. Kama replied, 'after all I am only a Suta.' But Arjuna has behaved as bad as Rama behaved towards Vali—*Ibid Adhya. 50.*

29. Ashvashthama was quieted by Bhisma, Drona and Krapa, Duryodhan and Kama tendered apology to Drona— *Ibid Adhya. 51.* 30. Bhishma's decision that the Pandavas have completed 13 years.—*ibid Adhya. 52.*

31. Arjuna has defeated the army of the Kauravas.— *Ibid Adhya. 53.*

32. Arjuna defeats Kama's *Bhrata*. Arjuna defeats Kama and Kama runs away— *Ibid* Adhya. 54.

33. Arjuna destroys the army of the Kauravas and breaks the Rath of Kripacharya—*Ibid* Adhya. 55.

34. Gods came out in heaven to witness the fight between Arjuna and the army of the Kauravas—*Ibid* Adhya. 56.

35. Battle between Krupa and Arjuna and the running away of Krupa.—*Ibid* Adhya. 57.

36. Battle between Drona and Arjuna and running away of Drona.—*Ibid* Adhya. 58.

37. Battle between Ashvashtama and Arjuna—*Ibid* Adhya. 59.

38. Battle between Kama and Arjuna, defeat of Kama—Adhya. 60.

39. Attack on Bhishma by Arjuna—*Ibid* Adhya. 61.

40. Arjuna kills the Kauravas soldiers—*Ibid* Adhya. 62.

41. Defeat of Bhishma and his running away from the Battle-field— *Ibid* Adhya. 64.

42. Fainting of the soldiers of the Kauravas. Bhishmas telling them to return home.—*Ibid* Adhya. 66.

43. Kaurava soldiers surrendering to Arjuna from *Abhay*. Uttar and Arjuna return to Virat Nagari— *Ibid* Adhya. 67.

44. Virat enters his capital and his people honouring him.— *Ibid* Adhya. 68.

45. The Pandavas enter the King's Assembly.—*Ibid* Adhya. 69.

46. Arjuna introduces his other brothers in Virat.-- *Ibid* Adhya. 71.

47. Marriage between Arjuna's son and the daughter of Virat.— *Ibid* Adhya. 72.

48. Thereafter the Pandavas leave Virat Nagari and live in Upaplavya Nagari— *Ibid* Adhya. 72.

49. Arjuna thereafter brought his son Abhimanyu, Vasudev, and Yadav from Anrut Desh—*Ibid* Adhya. 72.

50. Friends of Yudhisthir such as Kings Kashiraj and Shalya came with two Akshauhini army. Similarly Yagyasen Drupadraj came with one Akshauhini. Draupadi's all sons Ajinkya, Shikhandi, Drustadumna also came .—*Ibid* 72.

## **UDYOGAPARVA**

1. After the marriage of Abhimanyu the Yadavas and the Pandavas met in the Sabha of King Virat. Krishna addresses them as to what is to be done about the future. We must do what is good both Kauravas and Pandavas. Dharma will accept anything—even one villaga—by *Dharma*. Even if he is given the whole kingdom by Duryodhana he will not accept it. Upto now the Pandavas have observed *Niti*. But if the Kauravas observe *Aniti* the Pandavas

will not hesitate to kill the Kauravas. Let nobody be afraid on account of the fact that the Pandavas are a minority. They have many friends who will come to their rescue. We must try to know the wishes of the Kauravas. I suggest that we should send a messenger to Duryodhan and ask him to give part of the Kingdom to the Pandavas.—Udyog Parva, Adhya. 1.

2. Balaram supports the proposal of Krishna but added that it was the fault of Dharma knowing that he was losing at the hands of Shakuni. Therefore instead of fighting with the Kauravas get what you can by negotiation.—*Ibid*, Adhya. 2.

3. Satyaki got up and condemned Balaram for his attitude— *Ibid*, Adhya. 3.

4. Drupad supports Satyaki. Drupad agrees to send his Purohit as a messenger—*Ibid*, Adhya. 4.

5. Krishna supports Drupad and goes to Dwarka. Kings invited by Drupad and Virat arrive. Similarly Kings invited by Duryodhan arrive.—*Ibid*. Adhya. 5.

6. Drupada instructs his purohit how to speak in the assembly and deal with the issue.—*Ibid* Adhya. 6.

7. Arjuna and Duryodhana both go to Dwarka to ask for his aid in the war. He said I will help you both. I can give my army to one and I can join one singly. Choose what you want. Duryodhan chose the army. Arjuna choose Krishna.—*Ibid* Adhya. 7.

8. Coming of Shalya to the Pandavas with a large army. Duryodhan thinks him lower. Meeting of Shalya and Pandavas. Pandavas request Shalya to discourage Kama in the war. Agreement of Shalya.— *Ibid*. Adhya. 8.

9. Adhya. 9—Irrelevant. 1

10. Adhya. 10—Irrelevant.

11. Adhya. 11—Irrelevant.

12. Adhya. 12—Irrelevant.

13. Adhya. 13—Irrelevant.

14. Adhya. 14—Irrelevant.

15. Adhya. 15—Irrelevant.

16. Adhya. 16—Irrelevant.

17. Adhya. 17—Irrelevant.

18. Adhya. 18—Irrelevant.

19. Adhya—Satyaki comes to Pandvas with his army and Bhagadatta went to Duryodhana.

20. Adhya. 20—The Purohit of Drupada enters the Kauravas Sabha. The Purohit said that the Pandvas are prepared to part evil deeds of the Kauravas and make a compromise with them. He told them that the Pandavas have a large army yet they wish to compromise.



21. Adhya. 21—Bhishma supports the Purohit. Kama objects. Dispute between Bhishma and Kama. Dhrtarashtra suggests that Sanjaya be sent for negotiation on their behalf.

22. Adhya. 22—Dhrtarashtra sends Sanjaya to go to the Pandvas and give his blessings and say what you think best for the occasion and which will not advance enmity between the two.

23. Adhya. 23—Sanjaya's going to the Pandvas.

24. Adhya. 24—Conversation between Sanjaya and Yudhistira.

25. Adhya. 25—Sanjaya condemns war.

26. Adhya. 26—Dharma says 'I am prepared to compromise if the Kauravas give us our Kingdom of Indraprastha.

27. Adhya. 27—It is *Adharma* to kill *Gurujan* and obtain a Kingdom. If the Kauravas refuse to give you any kingdom without war you had better live by begging in the Kingdom of Vrishni and Andhakas.

28. Adhya. 28—Says, Dharma Blame us Sanjaya if you think we have acted or acting against Dharma. Sanjaya says I want Swadharma or Sama.

29. Adhya. 29—Krishna's address to Sanjaya why war is legitimate and asks him to go and tell his views to Dhrtarashtra.

30. Adhya. 30—Sanjaya returns to Kauravas and tells Duryodhana to war. Duryodhan either to return Indraprastha to the Pandavas or be ready for war.

31. Adhya. 30—Sanjaya tells Duryodhan to live and let live. If he cannot give Indraprastha let him give us five villages.

32. Adhya. 31—Sanjaya reaches Dhrtarashtra at night and tells him I will give you the message of Dharma in the morning.

33. Adhya. 32—Dhrtarashtra is uneasy and wants to know the message Sanjaya brought. So he sends for Sanjaya immediately. Sanjaya gives him the message and says settle the dispute by giving them their share of the Kingdom.

34. Adhya. 34—Dhrtarashtra calls for Vidura and asks his advice. His advice is, give the Pandavas their portion of the Kingdom.

35. Adhya. 35—Irrelevant.

36. Adhya. 36—Irrelevant. Vidur says make the two sides friends.

37. Adhya. 37—Irrelevant.

38. Adhya 38—Irrelevant.

39. Adhya. 39—Dhrtarashtra tells Vidura I cannot give up Duryodhan although he is bad.

40. Adhya. 40—Vidura describes Chaturvarna.

41. Adhya. 41—Dhrtarashtra asks Vidur about Brahma. He says I

- can't because I am a Shudra. Then comes Sanat-Sujata.
42. Adhya. 42—Conversation between Dhratarashtra & Sanat Sujata on Brahma Vidya.
43. Adhya. 43—Dialogue between Sanat Sujat and Dhratarashtra on the same subject.
44. Adhya. 44—Sanat Sujata on Brahma Vidya.
45. Adhya. 45—Sanat Sujata preaches yoga.
46. Adhya. 46—Sanat Sujat on Atma.
47. Adhya. 47—Kauravas come to the Sabha to hear the message brought by Sanjaya.
48. Adhya. 48—Sanjaya delivers the message. (Particularly that part which was given by Arjuna?)
49. Adhya. 49—Praise of Arjuna & Krishna by Bhishma. Kama gets angry. Drona supports Bhishma and advices compromise.
50. Adhya. 50—Dhratarashtra asks Sanjaya who are the allies of the Pandvas & their strength. Sanjaya taunts, gets up answers.
51. Adhya. 51—Dhratarashtra thinks of the prowess of Bhismna and sighs.
52. Adhya. 52—Dhratarashtra thinks of the prowess of Arjuna and sighs.
53. Adhya. 53—Dhratarashtra thinks of the prowess of Dharma and his friends. He tells his sons to compromise with the Pandavas.
54. Adhya. 54—Sanjaya predicts the defeat of the Kauravas.
55. Adhya. 55—Duryodhan says Pandavas cannot defeat us because our forces are greater.
56. Adhya. 56—Sanjaya describes the disposition of the army made by the Pandavas.
57. Adhya. 57—Sanjaya describes how Pandavas have designed to kill the warriors of the Kauravas. Duryodhan says he is not affraid of the Pandvas defeating the Kauravas who have a larger army.
58. Adhya. 58—Dhratarashtra tells Duryodhan not to fight. Duryodhan takes oath not to swerve from battle. Dhratarashtra weeps.
59. Adhya. 59—Dhratarashtra tells Sanjaya to tell him what conversation took place between Krishna & Arjuna.
60. Adhya. 60—Dhratarashtra tells Duryodhan that the Devas will help the Pandavas and will ruin the Kauravas.
61. Adhya. 61—Duryodhan says he is not afraid of that.
62. Adhya. 62—Kama says he alone is capable of killing Arjuna.
63. Adhya. 63—Duryodhan says he is fighting relying on Kama & not on Bhishma, Drona etc.
64. Adhya. 64—Vidura tells Duryodhan give up enmity.
65. Adhya. 65—Dratarashtra admonishes Duryodhan.

66. Adhya. 66—Sanjaya tells Dratarashtra the message of Arjuna.

67. Adhya. 67—The kings who had assembled in the hall of the Kauravas return to their homes. Vyas and Gandhari come with Vidur. Vyas told Sanjaya to tell Dhrtarashtra every thing he knows about the real Swarup of Krishna & Arjuna.

68. Adhya. 68—Sanjaya tells Dhrtarashtra about Krishna.

69. Adhya. 69—Dhrtarashtra tells Duryodhan to surrender to Krishna. Refusal of Duryodhan. Gandhari abuses Duryodhan.

70. Adhya 70—Different names of Krishna & their origin.

71. Adhya 71—Dhrtarashtra surrenders to Krishna.

72. Adhya. 72—Conversation between Yudhistira and Krishna. Yudhistir says Sanjaya told him not to rely on Dhrtarashtra. Yudhistir stresses the importance of property Speaks of (Kshatradharma) & the necessity of observing it Krishna proposes to go to the Kauravas. Yudhistir does not like the idea but says to what you think is the best.

73. Adhya. 73—Krishna tells Dharma the secret which has in mind. Don't use soft speech with the Pandvas tells Krishna to Dharma. There are plenty of reasons why you should not make any compromise with the Kauravas. Emphasizes how the Kauravas disgraced Draupadi. Therefore Oh ; Dharma do not hesitate to kill them.

74. Adhya. 74—Bhishma tells Krishna to use soft speech with the Kauravas.

75. Adhya. 75—Krishna redicules Bhima.

76. Adhya. 76—Bhima makes up his mind to fight.

77. Adhya. 77—Krishna tells Bhima the difference between *Daiva* and *Paurush*.

78. Adhya. 78—Arjuna tells Krishna to adopt Shama—failing war can be considered.

79. Adhya. 79—Krishna's talk to Arjun. I will try to bring about a settlement by peace. If that is not possible be ready for war. I will not communicate to Duryodhan Dharma's willingness to accept five villages.

80. Adhya. 80—Nakul tells Krishna to do the best.

81. Adhya. 81—Sahadev meets Krishna and tells him to bring about a war with the Kauravas. Satyaki said that all warriors assembled here agree with the view of Sahadeo.

82. Adhya. 82—Draupadi meets Krishna & tells him that she will not be satisfied unless Duryodhan is punished. Krishna gives her assurance.

83. Adhya. 83—Last meeting between Arjuna and Krishna. Arjuna makes the best effort for *Shama*. Yudhishtir tells Krishna to give assurances to Kunti. Krishna starts on his mission.

84. Adhya. 84—Good & Bad omens to Krishna on his way to Hastinapura.

85. Adhya. 85—Duryodhana creates Resting places for Krishna's journey to Hastinapur. Krishna arrives in Hastinapur.

86. Adhya. 86—Dhratarashtra tells Vidura what gifts are to be offered to Krishna.

87. Adhya. 87—Vidur tells Dhratarashtra that he cannot separate Krishna from the Pandavas.

88. Adhya. 88—Duryodhan says Krishna is worship. But this is not the time to worship him. Bhishma tells Duryodhan to make a compromise with Pandavas. Duryodhan desires to look up Krishna. Bhishma's strong opposition to Duryodhana.

89. Adhya. 89—Krishna's entry into Hastinapur. Meeting with Dhratarashtra. His stay with Vidura.

90. Adhya. 90—Meeting between Kunti and Krishna—Kunti's sorrow. Krishna consoles her. Kunti tells Krishna— (1) Tell my sons to fight for their kingdom. (2) I am sorry for Draupadi.

91. Adhya. 91—Kauravas invite Krishna to dinner. Krishna's refusal. Krishna goes for meal to Vidur.

92. Adhya. 92—Vidur tells Krishna that he does not like his going among the Kauravas.

93. Adhya. 93—Krishna tells Vidura not all the Kauravas can hurt him. I have come only because *Shama* is Punnyakarak.

94. Adhya. 94—Krishna enters the assembly Hall of the Kauravas.

95. Adhya. 95—Krishna's address to the Assembly. He told them Pandavas are ready for both peace as well as war. Give them half their kingdom.

96. Adhya. 96—Jamadgni tells a story against arrogance.

97. Adhya. 97-105—Matali Akhyan.

98. Adhya. 106—Narada's advice to Duryodhana.

99. Adhya. 106-123— Galava Akhyan.

100. Adhya. 124—Dhratarashtra tells Krishna to advise Duryodhana.

101. Adhya. 125—Bhishma's advice to Duryodhan. Drona's support. Vidura's condemnation of Duryodhana. Dhratarashtra's advice.

102. Adhya. 126—Bhishma & Drona advice Duryodhana a second time.

103. Adhya. 127—Duryodhana announces not to give anything to the Pandavas.

104. Adhya. 128—Krishna condemns Duryodhana. Duryodhan leaves the Assembly. Dushyasana's speech. Krishna warns Bhishma.

104. Adhya. 129—Dhratarashtra asks Vidur to bring Gandhari to the Assembly. Duryodhan comes back—Gandhari asks him to give half the Kingdom to Pandavas.

104. Adhya. 130—Duryodhana leaves the assembly. His intention to kill Krishna. Satyaki informs Dhratarashtra of this secret plot. Srikrishna's speech. Dhratarashtra calls back Duryodhana to the assembly, warns him. Vidur's condemnation.

105. Adhya. 131—*Bhagwana's Vishwarup Darshan* Dhratarashtra gets *Divya Chakshu?* Krishna leaves the assembly and goes to. Kunti.

106. Adhya. 132—Krishna tells Kunti what happened in the assembly. Kunti tells Krishna war is natural to Kshatriyas. There is no better Dharma than that.

107. Adhya. 133—Kunti tells Krishna the story of Vidula to reinforce her point.

108. Adhya. 134—Vidula's story.

109. Adhya. 135—Vidula's story.

110. Adhya. 136—Vidula's story.

III. Adhya. 137—Kunti's advice to her sons. Krishna's advice to Kama and his departure to *Upapalavya Nagari*.

112. Adhya. 138—Advice to Duryodhana by Bhishma & Drona.

113. Adhya. 139—Bhishma's sorrow. Drona again advises Duryodhana.

114. Adhya. 140—Conversation between Dhratarashtra and Sanjaya. Krishna advices Kama.

115. Adhya. 141—Kama's reply to Krishna.

116. Adhya. 142—Krishna's assurance to Kama that the Pandava's will win.

117. Adhya. 143—Kama sees bad omens. His determination to finish Pandavas. His going home.

118. Adhya. 144—Conversation between Vidura and Pratha. Knows Duryodhana is determined to fight. Kunti's sorrow. Her wish to tell Kama his origin. Kunti goes to the bank of the river.

119. Adhya. 145—Kunti meets Kama and tells him his origin and request him to join the Pandavas.

120. Adhya. 146—Surya supports the proposal of Kunti. Kama rejects it. Promises to save all the Pandavas except Arjuna.

121. Adhya. 147—Krishna goes to Pandavas. Yudhistir asks what happened in the Kaurava Sabha.

122. Adhya. 147, 148, 149, 150—Krishna relates the whole story.

123. Adhya. 151—Appointment of Senapati for the Pandavas Army. Entry of Pandava's Army in Kurushetra.

124. Adhya. 152—Description of Pandavas arrangement for supply to the Army.

125. Adhya. 153—Arrangement on Kaurava's side. Our army must enter Kurushetra tomorrow early morning.

126. Adhya. 154—Dharma's fear of fall from his moral rectitude by going to war. Krishna satisfied him. Arjuna said you must fight.

127. Adhya. 155—Description of Duryodhan's army.

128. Adhya. 156—Bhishma is made Senapati of the Kaurava's army. Kama is offended. His decision not to take command till Bhishma is dead. *Kaurava's Army enters Kurushetra.*

129. Adhya. 157—Krishna becomes commander of Pandava's Army.

130. Balrarn goes on Pilgrimage saying I do not like the Kauravas destroyed.

131. Adhya. 158—Rukmi neither wanted by Arjuna nor by Duryodhana goes home.

132. Adhya. 159—Conversation between Sanjaya and Dhrtarashtra. He blames Dhrtarashtra.

133. Adhya. 160—Pandava's Army on the bank of the *Hiranyavati* river. Duryodhan sends offensive messages to Pandavas and Krishna saying fight if you can.

134. Adhya. 161. Uluka goes with the messages.

135. Adhya. 162—Angry Pandavas send back angry messages. They give order that the war will start tomorrow.

## **CHAPTER 11**

### **Brahmins Versus Kshatriyas**

*This manuscript consists of 43 foolscap typed pages. All the loose pages are tagged. The original title, 'Brahmins and Kshatriyas and the Counter-Revolution ' has been modified in Dr. Ambedkar's hand-writing as 'Brahmins Versus Kshatriyas ' on the title page. The essay seems to be complete.—*  
Editors.

The sacred literature of the Hindus contains many cases of conflicts between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas and even of sanguinary wars between the two.

The first case reported was that of the King Vena. Vena was a Kshatriya King. His conflict with the Brahmins has been referred to in various authorities. The following account is taken from the Harivansa.

"There was formerly a Prajapati (lord of creatures), a protector of righteousness, called Anga, of the race of Atrai, and resembling him in power. His son was the Prajapati Vena, who was but indifferently skilled in duty, and was born of Sunitha, the daughter of Mrityu. This son of the daughter of Kala (Death), owing to the taint derived from his maternal grand-father, threw his duties behind his back, and lived in covetousness under the influence of

desire. This king established an irreligious system of conduct ; transgressing the ordinances of the Veda, he was devoted to lawlessness. In his reign men lived without study of the sacred books and without the Vashatkara, and the gods had no some-libations to drink at sacrifices."

No sacrifice or oblation shall be offered,—such was the ruthless determination of that Prajapati, as the time of his destruction approached. 'I', he declared, 'am the object, and the performer of sacrifice, and the sacrifice itself; it is to me that sacrifice should be presented, and oblations offered.' This transgressor of the rules of duty, who arrogated to himself what was not his due, was then addressed by all the great Rishis, headed by Marichi : "We are about to consecrate ourselves for a ceremony which shall last for many years; practise not unrighteousness, of Vena ; this is not the eternal rule of duty. Thou art in every deed a Prajapati of Atri's race and thou hast engaged to protect thy subject. `The foolish Vena, ignorant of what was right, laughingly answered those great Rishis who had so addressed him: "Who but myself is the ordainer of duty? or whom ought I to obey? Who on earth equals me in sacred knowledge, in process, in austere fervour, in truth? Ye who are deluded and senseless know not that I am the source of all beings and duties. Hesitate not to believe that I, if I willed, could turn up the earth, or deluge it with water, or close up heaven and earth.' When owing to his delusion and arrogance Vena could not be governed, then the mighty Rishis becoming licensed, seized the vigorous and struggling king, and rubbed his left thigh. From this thigh, so rubbed, was produced a black man, very short in stature, who, being alarmed, stood with joined hands. Seeing that he was agitated, Atri said to him 'Sit down' (Nishida). He became the founder of the race of the Nishadas, and also progenitor of the Dhivaras (Fishermen), who sprang from the corruption of Vena.'

The second case is that of Pururavas. Pururavas is another Kshatriya King, son of Ila and grandson of Manu Vaivasvata. He came in conflict with the Brahmans the following account of which appears in the Adi Parva of the Mahabharata :

" Subsequently the wise Pururavas was born of Ila who, as we have heard was both his father and his mother. Ruling over thirteen islands of the ocean, and surrounded by beings who were all superhuman, himself a man of great renown, Pururavas, intoxicated by his prowess, engaged in a conflict with the Brahmans, and robbed them of their jewels, although they loudly remonstrated. Sanatkumara came from Brahma's heaven, and addressed to him an admonition, which however, he did not regard. Being then straightway cursed by the incenses Rishis, he perished, this covetous monarch, who, through piece of power, had lost his understanding." The third and a

somewhat serious conflict was that between King Nahusha and the Brahmins. Nahusha is the grandson of Pururavas. The story is told in two places in the Mahabharata once in the Vanaparvan and a second time in the Udyogaparvan. The following account is taken from the Udyogaparvan of the Mahabharata:

" After his slaughter of the demon Vritta, Indra became alarmed at the idea of having taken the life of a Brahman (for Vritta was regarded as such) and hid himself in the waters. In consequence of the disappearance of the king of the gods, all affairs, celestial as well as terrestrial, fell into confusion. The Rishis and gods then applied to Nahusha to be their king. After the first excusing himself on the plea of want of power, Nahusha at length, in compliance with their solicitations, accepted the high function. Upto the period of his elevation he had led a virtuous life, but he now became addicted to amusement and sensual pleasure, and even aspired to the possession of Indrani, Indra's wife, whom he had happened to see. The queen resorted to the Angiras Vrihaspati, the preceptor of the gods, who engaged to protect her. Nahusha was greatly incensed on hearing of this interference ; but the gods endeavoured to pacify him, and pointed out the immorality of appropriating another person's wife. Nahusha, however, would listen to no remonstrance, and insisted that in his adulterous designs he was no worse than Indra himself."

"The renowned Ahalya, a rishi's wife, was formerly corrupted by Indra in her husband's lifetime. Why was he not prevented by you? And many barbarous acts, and unrighteous deeds, and frauds were perpetrated of old by Indra; Why was he not prevented by you?" The gods, urged Nahusha, then went to bring Indrani; but Vrihaspati would not give her up. At his recommendation, however, she solicited Nahusha for some delay, till she should ascertain what had become of her husband. This request was granted." Indrani now went in search of her husband ; and by the help of Upasruti (the goddess of night and revealer of secrets) discovered him existing in a very subtile form in the stem of a lotus growing in a lake situated in a continent within an ocean north of the Himalayas. She made known to him the wicked intentions of Nahusha, and entreated him to exert his power, rescue her from danger, and resume his dominion. Indra declined any immediate interposition on the plea of Nahusha's superior strength ; but suggested to his wife a device by which the usurper might be hurled from his position. She was recommended to say to Nahusha that "if he would visit her on a celestial vehicle borne by Rishis, she would with pleasure submit herself to him."

"I desire for thee, king of the gods, a vehicle hitherto unknown, such as neither Vishnu, nor Rudra, nor the Asuras, nor the Rakshases employ. Let the



eminent Rishis, all united, bear thee, lord, in a car: this idea pleases me." Nahusha receives favourably this appeal to his vanity, and in the course of his reply thus gives utterance to his self-congratulation : "He is a personage of no mean prowess who makes the Munis his bearers. I am a fervid devotee of great might, lord of the past, the future, and the present. If I were angry the world would no longer stand ; on me everything depends..... Wherefore, O goddess, I shall, without doubt, carry out what you propose. The seven Rishis, and all the Brahman-rishis, shall carry me. Behold, beautiful goddess, my majesty and my prosperity." The narrative goes on : "Accordingly this wicked being, irreligious, violent, intoxicated by the force of conceit, and arbitrary in his conduct, attached to his car the Rishis who submitted to his command, and compelled them to bear him." Indrani then again resorts to Vrihaspati, who assures her that vengeance will soon overtake Nahusha for his presumption, and promises that he will himself perform a sacrifice with a view to the destruction of the oppressor, and the discovery of Indra's lurking place. Agni is then sent to discover and bring Indra to Vrihaspati ; and the latter, on Indra's arrival, informs him of all that had occurred during his absence. While Indra, with Kuvera, Yama, Soma and Varuna was devising means for the destruction of Nahusha, the sage Agastya came up, congratulated Indra on the fall of his rival, and proceeded to relate how it had occurred :

"Wearied with carrying the sinner Nahusha the eminent divine-rishis, and the spotless Brahman-rishis, asked that divine personage Nahusha (to solve) a difficulty; "Dost thou, O Vasava, most excellent of conquerors, regard as authoritative or not those Brahmana texts which are recited at the immolation of kine? " 'No', replied Nahusha, whose understanding was enveloped in darkness. The Rishis rejoined : 'Engaged in unrighteousness, thou attainest not unto righteousness : these texts, which were formerly uttered by great Rishis, are regarded by us as authoritative.' Then (proceeds Agastya) disputing with the Munis, Nahusha, impelled by unrighteousness, touched me on the head with his foot. In consequence of this the king's glory was smitten and his prosperity departed. When he had instantly become agitated and oppressed with fear, I said to him, 'Since thou, O fool, contemneth that sacred text, always held in honour, which has been composed by former sages, and employed by Brahman-rishis, and has touched my head with thy foot, and employest the Brahma—like the irresistible Rishis as bearers to carry thee,—therefore, shorn of thy lusture, and all thy merit exhausted, sink down, sinner, degraded from heaven to earth. For ten thousand years thou shalt crawl in the form of a huge serpent. When that period is completed, thou shalt again ascend to heaven. `So fell that wicked wretch from the sovereignty of the

gods. Happily, O Indra, we shall now prosper, for the enemy of the Brahmans has been smitten. Take possession of the three worlds, and protect their inhabitants, O husband of Sachi (Indrani) subduing thy senses, overcoming thine enemies, and celebrated by the great Rishis."

The fourth case is of King Nimi. Nimi was one of the sons of Ikshvaku. The facts of his conflict with the Brahmans are related in the Vishnu Purana which says :

"Nimi had requested the Brahman Rishi Vashistha to officiate at a sacrifice, which was to last a thousand years. Vashistha in reply pleaded a pre-engagement to Indra for five hundred years, but promised to return at the end of that period. The king made no remark, and Vashistha went away, supposing that he had assented to his arrangement. On his return, however, the priest discovered that Nimi had retained Gautama (who was, equally with Vashistha, a Brahmin-rishi) and others to perform the sacrifice ; and being incensed at the neglect to give him notice of what was intended, he cursed the king, who was then asleep, to lose his corporeal form. When Nimi awoke and learnt that he had been cursed without any previous warning, he retorted by uttering a similar curse on Vashistha, and then died. Nimi's body was emblamed. At the close of the sacrifice which he had begun, the gods, were willing, on the intercession of the priests, to restore him to life, but he declined the offer; and was placed by the deities, according to his desire, in the eyes of all living creatures. It is in consequence of this that they are always opening and shutting (nimisha means "The twinkling of the eye").

The fifth case relates to the conflict between Vashishtha and Vishvamitra. Vashishtha was a Brahmin priest. Vishvamitra was a Kshatriya. His great ambition was to become a Brahmin. The following episode reported from the Ramayana explains the reasons why he became anxious to become a Brahmin.

"There was formerly, we are told, a king called Kusa, son of Prajapati, who had a son called Kusanabha, who was father of Gadhi, the father of Vishvamitra. The latter ruled the earth for many thousand years. On one occasion, when he was making a circuit of the earth, he came to Vashishtha's hermitage, the pleasant abode of many saints, sages, and holy devotees, where, after all first declining, he allowed himself to be hospitably entertained with his followers by the son of Brahma. Vishvamitra, however, coveting the wonderous cow, which had supplied all the dainties of the feast, first of all asked that she should be given to him in exchange for a hundred thousand common cows, adding that "she was a gem, that gems were the property of the King, and, therefore, the cow owes his by right." On this price being refused, the King advances immensely in his offers, but all without

effect. He then proceeds very ungratefully, and tyrannically, it must be allowed—to have the cow removed by force, but she breaks away from his attendants, and rushes back to her master, complaining that he was deserting her. He replies that he was not deserting her, but that the king was much more powerful than he. She answers, 'Men do not ascribe strength to a Kshatriya : the Brahmans are stronger. The strength of Brahmins is divine, and superior to that of Kshatriyas. Thy strength is immeasurable. Vishvamitra, though of great vigour, is not more powerful than thou. Thy energy is invincible. Commission me, who have been acquired by thy Brahmanical power, and I will destroy the pride, and force, and attempt of this wicked prince.' She accordingly by her bellowing creates hundred of Pahalvas, who destroy the entire host of Vishvamitra, but are slain by him in their turn. Sakas and Yavanas, of great power and valour, and well armed, were then produced, who consumed the king's soldiers, but were routed by him. The cow then calls into existence by her bellowing, and from different parts of her body, other warriors of various tribes, who again destroyed Vishvamitra's entire army, foot soldiers, elephants, horses, chariots, and all. A hundred of the monarch's sons, armed with various weapons, then rushed in great fury on Vashishtha, but were all reduced to ashes in a moment by the blast of that sage's mouth. Vishvamitra, being thus utterly vanquished and humbled, appointed one of his sons to be regent, and travelled to the Himalaya, where he betook to austerities, and thereby obtained a vision of Mahadeva, who at his desire revealed to him the science of arms in all its branches, and gave him celestial weapons with which, elated and full of pride, he consumed the hermitage of Vashishtha, and put its inhabitants to flight.

Vashishtha then threatens Vishvamitra and uplifts his Brahmanical mace. Vishvamitra, too, raises his fiery weapon and calls out to his adversary to stand. Vashishtha bids him to show his strength and boasts that he will soon humble his pride. He asks: "What comparison is there between a Kshatriya's might and the might of a Brahman? Behold, thou contemptible Kshatriya, my divine Brahmanical power.' The dreadful fiery weapon uplifted by the son of Gadhi was then quenched by the rod of the Brahman, as fire is by water." Many and various other celestial missiles, as the nooses of Brahma, Kala (Time), and Varuna, the discus of Vishnu, and the trident of Shiva, were hurled by Vishvamitra at his antagonist, but the son of Brahma swallowed them up in his all-devouring mace. Finally, to the intense consternation of all the gods, the warrior shot off the terrific weapon of Brahma ; but this was equally ineffectual against the Brahmanical sage. Vashishtha had now assumed a direful appearance. "Jets of fire mingled with smoke darted from the pores of his body ; the Brahmanical mace blazed in his hand like a

smokeless mundane conflagration, or a second sceptre of Yama." Being appeased, however, by the munis, who proclaimed his superiority to his rival, the sage stayed his vengeance ; and Vishvamitra exclaimed with a groan: "Shame on a Kshatriya's strength : the strength of a Brahman's might alone is strength ; by the single Brahmanical mace all my weapons have been destroyed."

No alternative now remains to the humiliated monarch, but either to acquiesce in this help less inferiority, or to work out his own elevation to the Brahmanical order. He embraces the latter alternative : " Having pondered well this defeat, I shall betake myself, with composed senses and mind, to strenuous austere fervour, which shall exalt me to the rank of a Brahman." Intensely vexed and mortified, groaning and full of hatred against his enemy, he travelled with his queen to the south, and carried his resolution into effect. At the end of a thousand years Brahma appeared, and announced that he had conquered the heaven of royal sages (rajarshis): and, in consequence of his austere fervour, he was recognised as having attained that rank."

The conflict seems to have begun in the reign of King Sudas who belonged to the line of Ikshavaku. Vashishtha was the hereditary priest of King Sudas. For some reason which is not very clearly stated Sudas appointed Vishvamitra as his family priest. This brought about a conflict between Vishvamitra and Vashishtha. This conflict once started raged on for a long time.

The conflict between the two took a peculiar turn. If Vishvamitra was involved in a dispute Vashishtha came into the fray and sided with his opponent. If Vishvamitra was involved in dispute Vashishtha entered into fray and sided with Vishvamitra as opponent. It was a case of one persecuting the other.

The first such episode is that of Satyavrata otherwise called Trishanku. The story as told in the Harivamsha is as follows :

" Meanwhile Vashishtha, from the relation subsisting between the King (Satyavrata's father) and himself, a disciple and spiritual preceptor, governed the city of Ayodhya, the country, and the interior apartments of the royal palace. But Satyavrata, whether through folly or the force of destiny, cherished constantly an increased indignation against Vashishtha, who for a (proper) reason had not interposed to prevent his exclusion from the royal power by his father. 'The formulas of the marriage ceremonial are only binding,' said Satyavrata, 'when the seventh step has been taken, and this had not been done when I seized the damsel : still Vashishtha, who knows the precepts of the law, does not come to my aid.' Thus Satyavrata was

incensed in his mind against Vashishtha, who however, had acted from a sense of what was right. Nor did Satyavrata understand (he propriety of) that silent penance imposed upon him by his father..... When he had supported this arduous rite, (the supposed that) he had redeemed his family position. The venerable muni Vashishtha did not, however, (as has been said) prevent his father from setting him aside, but resolved to install his son as King. When the powerful prince Satyavrata had endured the penance for twelve years, he beheld, when he was without flesh to eat, the milch cow of Vashishtha which yielded all objects of desire ; and under the influence of anger ; delusion, and exhaustion, distressed by hunger, and failing in the ten duties he slew..... and both partook of her flesh himself, and gave it to Vishvamitra's sons to eat. Vashishtha hearing of this, became incensed against him", and imposed on his the name of Trisanku as he had committed three sins. On his return home, Vishvamitra was gratified by the support which his wife had received, and offered Trisanku the choice of a boon. When this proposal was made, Trisanku chose the boon of ascending bodily to heaven. All apprehension from the twelve year's drought being now at an end, the muni (Vishvamitra) installed Trisanku in his father's kingdom, and offered sacrifice on his behalf. The mighty Kausika then, in spite of the resistance of the gods and of Vashishtha, exalted the king alive to heaven." 2. As stated in the Harivamsa :

" In consequence of the wickedness which had been committed, Indra did not rain for a period of twelve years. At that time Vishvamitra had left his wife and children and gone to practise austerities on the sea-shore. His wife, driven to extremity by want. was on the point of selling her second son for a hundred cows, in order to support the others ; but this arrangement was stopped by the interventions of Satyavrata, who liberated the son when bound, and maintained the family by providing them with the flesh of wild animals ; and according to his father's injunction, consecrated himself for the performance of a silent penance for twelve years." The next episode in which they appear on opposite sides is that of Harishchandra the son of Trisanku. The story is told in the Vishnu Purana and in the Markendeya Purana. This is how the story runs:

"On one occasion, when hunting the king heard a sound of female lamentation which proceeded, it appears, from the sciences who were becoming mastered by the austere fervid sage Vishvamitra, in a way they had never been before by anyone else ; and were consequently crying out in alarm at his superiority. In fulfilment of his duty as a Kshatriya to defend the weak, and inspired by the god Ganesha, who had entered into him, Harishchandra exclaimed. "What sinner is this who is binding fire in the hem of his garment, while, I, his lord. am present, resplendent with force and fiery

vigour?' He shall to-day enter on his long sleep, pierced in all his limbs by arrows, which, by their discharge from my bow, illuminate all the quarters of the firmament." Vishvamitra was provoked by this address. In consequence of his wrath the Sciences instantly perished, and Harishchandra, trembling like the leaf of an Asvattha tree. submissively represented that he had merely done his duty as a king, which he defined as consisting in the bestowal of gifts on eminent Brahmins and other persons of slender means, the protection of the timid, and war against enemies. Vishvamitra hereupon demands a gift as a Brahman intent upon receiving one. The king offers him whatsoever he may ask : Gold, his own son, wife. body, like kingdom, good fortune. The saint first requires the present for the Rajasuya sacrifice. On this being promised, and still more offered, he asks for the empire of the whole earth, including everything but Harishchandra himself, his wife and son. and his virtue which follows its posses or wherever he goes." "Harishchandra joyfully agrees. Vishvamitra then requires him to strip off all his ornaments, to clothe himself in the bark of trees, and to quit the kingdom with his wife Saviya (Taramati) and his son. When he is departing the sage stops him and demands payment of his yet unpaid sacrificial fee. The king replies that he has only the persons of his wife his son, and himself left. Vishvamitra insists that he must nevertheless pay: and that "unfulfilled promises of gifts to Brahmans bring destruction." The unfortunate prince, after being threatened with a curse, engages to make the payment in a month ; and commences his journey with a wife unused to such fatigues, amid the universal lamentations of his subjects. While he lingers, listening to their affectionate remonstrances against his desertion of his kingdom, Vishvamitra, comes up and being incensed at the delay and the King's apparent hesitation, strikes the queen with his staff, as she is dragged on by her husband. Harishchandra then proceeded with his wife and little son to Benares, imagining that this divine city, as the special property of Siva, could not be possessed by any mortal. Here he found the relentless Vishvamitr waiting for him, and ready to press his demand for the payment of his sacrificial gift, even before the expiration of the full period of grace. In this extremity Saivya the queen suggests with a sobbing voice that her husband should sell her. On hearing this proposal Harishchandra swoons, then recovers, utters lamentations, and swoons again, and his wife, seeing his said condition, swoon also. While they are in a state of unconsciousness, their famished child exclaims in distress, " O father, father, give me bread ; O mother, mother give me food : hunger overpowers me and my tongue is parched." At this moment Vishvamitra returns, and after recalling Harishchandra to consciousness by spinkling water over him, again urges payment of the present. The king again swoons, and is again restored.

The sag threatens to curse him if his engagement is not fulfilled by sunset. Being now pressed by his wife, the King agrees to sell her ading, however, "If my voice can utter such a wicked word, I do not what the most inhuman wretches cannot perpetrate." He then goes into the city and in selfacusing language offers his queen for sale as a slave. A rich old Brahman offers to buy her at a price corresponding to her value, to do his household work. Seeing his mother dragged away, the child ran after her, his eyes dimmed with tears, and crying 'mother'. The Brahman purchaser kicked him when he came *up*; but he would not let his mother go, and continued crying 'mother, mother.' The queen then said to the Brahman, ' Be so kind, my master, as to but also this child, as without him I shall prove to thee but a useless purchase. Be thus merciful to me in my wretchedness, unite me with my son, like a cow to her calf." The Brahman agrees: "Take this money and give me the boy." After the Brahman had gone out of sight with his purchases, Vishvamitra again appeared and renewed his demands ; and when the afflicted Harishchanda offered him the small sum he had obtained by the sale of his wife and son, he angrily replied, "If, miserable Kshatriya, thou thinkest this a sacrificial gift befitting my deserts, thou shall soon beheld the transcendent power of my ardent austere fervour, of my spotless Brahmanhood of my terrible majesty, and of my holy study. Harishchandra promises an additional gift, and Vishvamitra allows him the remaining quarter of the day for its liquidation. On the terrified and afflicted prince offering himself for sale, in order to gain the mean of meeting this cruel demand, Dharma (Righteousness) appears in the form of a hideous and offensive Chandala, and agrees to buy him at his own price, large or small. Harishchandra declines such a degrading servitude, and declares that he would rather be consumed by the fire of his persecutor's curse than submit to such a fate. Vishvamitra however again comes on The scene, asks why he does not accept the large sum offered by the Chandala ; and, when he pleads in excuse his descent from the solar race, threatens to fulminate a curse against him if he does not accept that method of meeting his liability. Harishchandra implores that he may be spared this extreme of degradation, and offers to become Vishvamitra's slave in payment of the residue of his debt; whereupon the sage rejoins, "If thou art my slave, then I sell thee as such to the Chandala for a hundred millions of money."

"The Chandala, delighted, pays down the money, and carries off Harishchandra, bound beaten, confused and afflicted, to his own place of abode. Harishchandra is sent by the Chandala to steal grave clothes in a cemetary and is told that he will receive two-sixths goind to his masters, and one-sixth to the King. In this horrid spot, and in this degrading occupation, he

spent in great misery, twelve months, which seemed to him like a hundred years. He then falls asleep and has a series of dreams suggested by the life he had been leading. After he awoke, his wife came to the cemetery to perform the obsequies of their son, who had died from the bite of a serpent. At first the husband and wife did not recognize each other, from the change in appearance which had been brought upon them by their miseries. Harishchandra however, soon discovered from the tenor of her lamentations that it is his wife, and falls into a swoon; as the queen does also when she recognizes her husband. When consciousness returns, they both break out into lamentations, the father bewailing in a touching strain the loss of his son, and the wife the degradation of the King. She then falls on his neck, embraces him, and asks "whether all this is a dream, or a reality, as she is utterly bewildered", and adds, that "if it be a reality, then righteousness is unavailing to those who practise it." After hesitating to devote himself to death on his son's funeral pyre without receiving his master's leave, Harishchandra resolves to do so, braving all the consequences, and consoling himself with the hopeful anticipation: "If I have given gifts, and offered sacrifices and gratified my religious teachers, then may I be reunited with my son and with thee (my wife) in another world." The queen determines to die in the same manner. When Harishchandra, after placing his son's body on the funeral pile, is meditating on the Lord Shri Narayan Krishna, the supreme spirit, all the gods arrive, headed by Dharma (righteousness), and accompanied by Vishvamitra. Dharma entreats the king to desist from his rash intention; and Indra announces to him that he, his wife, and son have conquered heaven by their good works. Amrosia, the antidote of death, and flowers are rained by the god from the sky; and the king's son is restored to life and the bloom of youth. The king, adorned with celestial clothing and garlands, and the queen, embrace their son. Harishchandra, however declares that he cannot go to heaven till he has received his master the Chandala's permission, and has paid him a ransom. Dharma then reveals to the king that it was he himself who had miraculously assumed the form of a Chandala. The king next objects that he cannot depart unless his faithful subjects, who are shares in his merits, are allowed to accompany him to heaven, at least for one day. This request is granted by Indra; and after Vishvamitra has inaugurated Rohitasva the king's son to be his successor, Harishchandra, his friends and followers, all ascend in company to heaven. Even after this great consummation, however, Vashishtha, the family-priest of Harishchandra, hearing, at the end of a twelve years' abode in the waters of the Ganges, an account of all that has occurred, becomes vehemently incensed at the humiliation inflicted on the excellent monarch, whose virtues and devotion to the gods and Brahmans



he celebrates, declares that his indignation had not been so great roused even when his own hundred sons had been slain by Vishvamitra, and in the following words dooms the latter to be transformed into crane. Wherefore that wicked man, enemy of the Brhmans, smitten by my curse, shall be expelled from the society of intelligent beings, and losing his understanding shall be transformed into a Vaka." Vishvamitra reciprocates the curse, and changes Vashishtha into a bird of the species called Ari. In their new shapes the two have a furious fight. the Ari being of the portentous height of two thousand yojanas = 18,000 miles, and the Vaka of 3090 yojanas. The first assail each other with their wings ; then the Vaka smites his antagonist in the same manner, while the Ari strikes with his talons. Falling mountains, overturned by the blasts of wind raised by the flapping of their wings, shake the whole earth, the waters of the ocean overflow, the earth itself, thrown off its perpendicular slopes downwards patala, the lower regions. Many creatures perish by these various convulsions. Attracted by the dire disorder, Brahma arrives, attended by all the gods, on the spot, and command the combatants to desist from their fray. They were too fiercely infuriated to regard this injunction; but Brahma put an end to the conflict by restoring them to their natural forms, and counselling them to be reconciled.

The next episode in which they came in as opponents is connected with *Ambarish* King of Ayodhya.

<sup>1</sup>The story relates that Ambarisha was engaged in performing a sacrifice, when Indra carried away the victim. The priest said that this ill-omened event had occurred owing to the king's had administration, and would call for a great expiation, unless a human victim could be produced. After a long search the royal rishi (Ambarisha) came upon the Brahman-rishi Richika, a descendent of Bhrgu, and asked him to sell one of his sons for a victim, at the price of a hundred thousand cows. Richika answered that he would not sell his eldest son; and his wife added that she would not sell the youngest: eldest sons" she observed, "being generally the favourites of their fathers, and youngest sons of their mothers." The second son, Sunassena, then said that in that case he regarded himself as the one who was to be sold, and desired the king to remove him. The hundred thousand cows, with ten millions of gold pieces and heaps of jewels, were paid down, and Sunassepa carried away. As they were passing through Pushkara Sunassepa beheld his maternal uncle Vishvamitra who was engaged in austerities there with other rishis, threw himself into his arms, and implored his assistance, urging his orphan friendless, and helpless state, as claims on the sage's benevolence.

"Vishvamitra soothed him: and pressed his own sons to offer themselves as victim in the room of Sunassepa. This proposition met with no favour from

Madhushyanda and the other sons of the royal hermit, who answered with haughtiness and derision: "How is that thou sacrificest thine own sons, and seekest to rescue those of others? We look upon this as wrong, and like the eating of one's own flesh." The sage was exceedingly wroth at this disregard of his injunction, and doomed his sons to be born in the most degraded classes, like Vashishtha's sons, and to eat dog's flesh, for a thousand years. He then said to Sunassepa : When thou art bound with hallowed cords, decked with a red garland, and annointed with unguents, and fastened to the sacrificial post of Vishnu, then address thyself to Agni, and sing these two divine verses (gathas), at the sacrifice of Ambarisha ; then shalt thou attain the fulfilment." Being furnished with the two gathas, Sunassepa proposed at once to king Ambarisha that they should set out for their destination. When bound at the stake to be immolated, dressed in a red garment, " he celebrated the two gods, Indra and his younger brother (Vishnu), with the excellent verses. The thousand-eyed (Indra) was pleased with the secret hymn, and bestowed long life on Sunassepa." The last episode recorded in which the two appear as opponents is connected with King *Kalmashapada*. The episode is recorded in the Adi Parva of the Mahabharata.

" Kalmashapada was a King of the race Ikshvaku. Vishvamitra wished to be employed by him as his officiating priest; but the king preferred Vashishtha." It happened, however, that the king went out to hunt, and after having killed a large quantity of game, he became very much fatigued, as well as hungry and thirsty. Meeting Saktri, the eldest of Vashishtha's hundred sons, on the road, he ordered him to get out of his way. The priest civilly replied : "The path is mine, O King; this is the immemorial law; in all observances the king must cede the way to the Brahman." Neither party would yield, and the dispute waxing warmer, the king struck the muni with his whip. The muni, resorting to the usual expedient of offended sages, by a curse doomed the king to become a man eater. "It hapened that at that time enmity existed between Vishvamitra and Vashishtha on account of their respective claims to be priest to Kalmashapada." Vishvamitra had followed the king; and approached while he was disputing with Saktri. Perceiving, however, the son of his rival Vashishtha, Vishvamitra made himself invisible, and passed them, watching his opportunity. The king began to implore Saktri's clemency: but Vishvamitra wishing to prevent their reconciliation, commanded a Rakshasa (a man-devouring demon) to enter into the king. Owing to the conjoint influence of the Brahma-rishi's curse, and Vishvamitra's command, the demon obeyed the injunction. Perceiving that his object was gained, Vishvamitra left things to take their course, and absented himself from the country. The king having happened to meet a hungry Brahman, and sent him, by the hand of his cook

(who could procure nothing else), some human flesh to eat, was cursed by him also to the same effect as by Saktri. The curse, being now augmented in force, took effect, and Saktri himself was the first victim, being eaten up by the King. The same fate befell all the other sons of Vashishtha at the instigation of Vishvamitra. Perceiving Saktri to be dead, Vishvamitra again and again incited the Rakshasa against the sons of Vashishtha; and accordingly the furious demon devoured those of his sons who were younger than Saktri as a lion eats up the small beasts of the forest. On hearing of the destruction of his sons by Vishvamitra, Vashishtha supported his affliction, as the great mountain sustains the earth. He meditated his own destruction, but never thought of exterminating the Kausikas. This divine sage hurled himself from the summit of Meru, but fell upon the rocks as if on a heap of cotton. Escaping alive from his fall, he entered a glowing fire in the forest; but the fire, though fiercely blazing, not only failed to burn him, but seemed perfectly cool. He next threw himself into the sea with a heavy stone attached to his neck; but was cast up by the waves on the dry land. He then went home to his hermitage; but seeing it empty and desolate, he was again overcome by grief and went out; and seeing the river Vipasa which was swollen by the recent rains and sweeping along many trees torn from its banks, he conceived the design of drowning himself into its water, he accordingly tied himself firmly with cords, and threw himself in, but the river severing his bonds, deposited him unbound (vipasa) on dry land; whence the name of the stream, as imposed by the sage. He afterwards saw and threw himself into the dreadful Satadru (Sutlej), which was full of alligators, etc., and derived its name rushing away in a hundred directions on seeing the Brahman brilliant as fire. In consequence of this he was once more stranded; and seeing he could not kill himself, he went back to his hermitage." There are only particular instances of their general enmity towards each other. This general enmity was of a mortal kind so much so that Vishvamitra wanted even to murder Vashishtha. This is related in the Shalyaparva of the Mahabharata. Says the author of the Mahabharata :

"There existed a great enmity, arising from rivalry in their austerities, between Vishvamitra and the Brahman rishi Vashishtha. Vashishtha had an extensive hermitage in Sthanutirtha, to the east of which was Vishvamitra's..... These two great ascetics were every day exhibiting intense emulation in regard to their respective austerities. But Vishvamitra, beholding the might of Vashishtha, was the most chagrined; and fell into deep thought. The idea of this sage, constant in duty(!) was the following: 'This river Sarasvati will speedily bring to me on her current the austere Vashishtha, the most eminent of all mutterers of prayers. When that most excellent Brahman

has come, I shall most assuredly kill him.' Having thus determined, the divine sage Vishvamitra, his eyes reddened by anger, called to mind the chief of rivers. She being thus the subject of his thoughts, became very anxious, as she knew him to be very powerful and very irascible. Then trembling palid, and with joined hands, the Sarasvati stood before the chief of munis. Like a woman whose husband has been slain, she was greatly distressed; and said to him, 'What shall I do?' The incensed muni replied, 'Bring Vashishtha hither speedily, that I may slay him. 'The lotus-eyed goddess, joining her hands trembled in great fear, like a creeping plant agitated by the wind "..... Vishvamitra, however, although he saw her condition, repeated his command. "The Sarasvati, who knew how sinful was his design, and that the might of Vashishtha was unequalled, went trembling, and in great dread of being cursed by both the sages, to Vashishtha, and told him what his rival had said. Vashishtha seeing her emaciated, pale, and anxious, spoke thus: 'Deliver thyself, O chief of rivers; carry me unhesitatingly to Vishvamitra, lest he curse thee'. Hearing these words of the merciful sage, the Sarasvati considered how she could act most wisely. She reflected, 'Vashishtha has always shown me great kindness; I must seek his welfare.' Then observing the Kausika sage praying and sacrificing on her brink, she regarded that as a good opportunity, and swept away the bank by the force of her current. In this way the son of Mitra and Varuna (Vashishtha) was carried down; and while he was being borne along, he thus celebrated the river: 'Thou, O Sarasvati, issued from the lake of Brahma, and pervadest the whole world with thy excellent streams. Residing in the sky, thou dischargest water into the clouds. Thou alone art all waters. By these we study.' 'Thou art nourishment, radiance, fame, perfection, intellect, light. Thou art speech; thou art Svaha; this world is subject to thee. Thou, in fourfold form, dwellest in all creatures '.....

Beholding Vashishtha brought near by the Sarasvati, Vishvamitra searched for a weapon with which to make an end of him. Perceiving his anger, and dreading lest Brahmanicide should ensue, the river promptly carried away Vashishtha in an easterly direction; thus fulfilling the commands of both sages, but eluding Vishvamitra. Seeing Vashishtha so carried away, Vishvamitra, impatient, and enraged by vexation, said to her : ' Since thou, O chief of rivers, hast eluded me, and hast receded, roll in waves of blood acceptable to the chief of demons," (which are fabled to gloat on blood). "The Sarasvati, being thus cursed, flowed for a year in a stream mingled with blood. . . . Rakshasas came to the place of pilgrimage, where Vashishtha had been swept away, and revealed in drinking to satiety the bloody stream in security, dancing and laughing, as if they had conquered heaven." Some rishis who arrived at the spot some time after were horrified to see the blood-

stained water, and the Rakshasas quaffing it, and "made the most strenuous efforts to rescue the Sarasvati."

The foregoing cases relate to individual conflicts between a particular Brahmin and a particular Kshatriya. The cases which follow are cases of class or communal conflicts between Brahmins on the one hand and the Kshatriyas on the other. They are not mere conflicts. Nor is it correct to say that they were like communal riots. They were class wars undertaken by one community with the avowed intention of exterminating the other root and branch. Two such class wars of extermination have been recorded in the Mahabharat. The first is a war of the Haihaya Kshatriyas on the Bhargava Brahmins. It occurred in the reign of the Haihaya King Kritavirya. The following is the description of this war in the Adiparvan of the Mahabharat.

"There was a king named Kritavirya, by whose liberality the Bhrigu, learned in the Vedas, who officiated as his priest, had been greatly enriched with corn, and money. After he had gone to heaven, his descendants were in want of money, and came to beg for a supply from the Bhrigus, of whose wealth they were aware. Some of the latter hid their money under ground, others bestowed it on Brahmans, being afraid of the Kshatriyas, while others again gave these last what they wanted. It happened, however, that a Kshatriya, while digging the ground, discovered some money buried in the house of a Bhrigu. The Kshatriyas then assembled and saw this treasure, and, being incensed, slew in consequence all the Bhrigus, whom they regarded with contempt, down to the children in the womb. The widows, however, fled to the Himalaya mountains. One of them concealed her unborn child in her thigh. The Kshatriyas, hearing of its existence from a Brahmani informant, sought to kill it; but it issued forth from its mother's thigh with lustre, and blinded the persecutors. After wandering about bewildered among the mountains for a time, they humbly supplicated the mother of the child for the restoration of their sight; but she referred them to her wonderful infant Aurva into whom the whole Veda, with its six Vedangas, had entered, as the person who (in retaliation of the slaughter of his relatives) had robbed them of their eye-sight, and who alone could restore it. They accordingly had recourse to him, and their eye-sight was restored. Aurva, however, meditated the destruction of all living creatures, in revenge for the slaughter of the Bhrigus, and entered on a course of austerities which alarmed both gods, asuras, and men; but his progenitors (Pitris) themselves appeared, and sought to turn him from his purpose by saying that they had no desire to be revenged on the Kshatriyas : It was not from weakness that the devout Bhrigus overlooked the massacre perpetrated by the murderous Kshatriyas. When we became distressed by old age, we ourselves desired to be slaughtered by them. The money which was

buried by someone in a Bhrigu's house was placed there for the purpose of exciting hatred, by those who wished to provoke the Kshatriyas. For what had we, who were desiring heaven, to do with money?" They add that they hit upon this device because they did not wish to be guilty of suicide, and concluded by calling upon Aurva to restrain his wrath; and abstain from the sin he was meditating, "Destroy not the Kshatriyas, O son, nor the seven worlds. Suppress thy kindled anger which nullifies the power of austere-fervour." Aurva, however, replies that he cannot allow his threat to remain unexecuted. His anger, unless wreaked upon some other object, will, he says, consume himself. And he argues on grounds of justice, expediency, and duty, against the clemency which his progenitors recommend. He is, however, persuaded by the Pitris to throw the fire of his anger into the sea, where they say it will find exercise in assailing the watery element, and in this way his threat will be fulfilled." The second class war and which was also a war of extermination was declared by the Bhargava Brahmins on the Haihaya Kshatriyas. In this the leader of Bhargava Brahmins was one Parashuram. The story of the birth of Parashuram is described in the Vishnu Purana in the following terms:

" Gadhi's daughter Satyavati had been given in marriage to an old Brahman called Richika, of the family of Bhrigu. In order that his wife might bear a son with the qualities of a Brahman, Richika had prepared for her a dish of Charu (rice, barley, and pulse, with butter and milk) for her to eat; and a similar mess for her mother, calculated to make her conceive a son with the character of a warrior. Satyavati's mother, however, persuaded her to exchange messes. She was blamed by her husband on her return home for what she had done. I quote the words of the original:

"Sinful woman, what improper deed is this that thou has done? I beheld thy body of a very terrible appearance. Thou hast certainly eaten the Charu prepared for thy mother. This was wrong. For into that Chari I had infused all the endowments of heriosm, vigour, and roce, whilst into thine I had introduced all these qualities of quietude, knowledge, and patnence which constitute the perfection of a Brahmin. Since thou hast acted in contravention of my design a son shall be born to thee who shall live the dreadful, martial, and murderous life of a Kshatriya and thy mother's offspring shall exhibit the peaceful disposition and conduct of a Brahman." As soon as she had heard this, Satyavati fell down and seized her husband's feet, and said, 'My lord, I have acted from ignorance; show kindness to me, let me not have a son of the sort thou hast described; if thou pleasest, let me have a grandson of that description. ` Subsequently she bore Jamadagni, and her mother gave birth to Vishvamitra. Satyavati became the river called Kausiki. Jamadagni wedded

Renuka, the daughter of Renu, of the family of Ikshvaku; and on her he begot a son called Parasurama." The following additional details about Parshuram's family history is given in the Venaparvan of the Mahabharata :

" Jamadagni and Satyavati had five sons, the youngest of whom was the reputable Parasurama. By his father's command he kills his mother (who by the indulgence of impure desire, had fallen from her previous sanctity), after the four elder sons had refused this matricidal offer, and had in consequence been deprived of reason by their father's curse. At Parasurama's desire however, his mother is restored by his father to life, and his brothers to reason; and he himself is absolved from all the guilt of murder; and obtains the boon of invincibility and long life from his father." This second class war took place in the reign of the Haihaya king Arjuna the son of King Kartavirya. To understand it correctly it is necessary to divide it into two parts for there are two stages in it. The trouble began with the Brahmans claiming certain prerogatives and powers exclusively for themselves and King—Arjuna scouting them in most contemptuous terms. As the Anushasanparvan of the Mahabharata puts it.

" Then ascending his chariot glorious as the resplendent sun, he exclaimed in the intoxication of his prowess, ' Who is like me in fortitude, courage, fame, heroism, energy, and vigour?' At the end of this speech a bodiless voice on the sky addressed him: 'Thou knowest not, O fool, that a Brahman is better than a Kshatriya. It is with the help of the Brahman that the Kshatriya rules his subjects. Arjuna answers 'If I am pleased, I can create, or, if displeased, annihilate, living beings; and no Brahman is superior to me in act, thought, or word. The first proposition is that the Brahmans are superior; the second that the Kshatriyas are superior: both of these thou hast stated with their ground, but there is a difference between them. The Brahmans are dependent on the Kshatriyas, and not the Kshatriyas on the Brahmans; and the Kshatriyas on the Brahmans; and the Kshatriyas are eaten up by the Brahmans, who wait upon them and only make the Vedas a pretence. Justice the protection of the people, has its seat in the Kshatriyas. From them the Brahmans derive their livelihood: how then can the latter be superior? I always keep in subjection to myself those Brahmans, the chief of all beings, who subsist on alms, and who have a high opinion of themselves. For truth was spoken by that female the Gayatri in the sky. I shall subdue all those unruly Brahmans clad in hides. No one in the three worlds, god or man can hurl me from my royal authority; wherefore I am superior to any Brahman.'" On hearing this Vayu comes and says to Arjuna :

"Abandon this sinful disposition, and to obeisance to the Brahmans. If thou shalt do them wrong, thy kingdom shall be convulsed. They will subdue thee;

those powerful men will humble thee, and expel thee from thy country' The king asks him, 'who art thou? Vayu replies, 'I Vayu, the messenger of the gods, and tell thee what is for thy benefit'. Arjuna rejoins, 'Oh thou displayest to-day a great warmth of devotion to the Brahmans. But say that a Brahman is like (any other) earth-born creature. Or say that this most excellent Brahman is something like the wind. But fire is like the waters, or the sun, or the sky.' Vayu then adduces various instances in which the superiority of the Brahmans has been manifested. Arjuna then drops his hostility against the Brahmans and becomes their friend. In the Anushasanparva he is reported to have said :

" I live altogether and always for the sake of the Brahmans. I am devoted to the Brahmans, and do obeisance to them continually. And it is through the favour of Dattatreya (A Brahman) that I have obtained all this power and high renown, and that I have practised righteousness."

It is in the second stage that Parashuram comes on the scene and exterminates the Kshatriyas. The story is told in the Shantiparvan in the following terms :

" Being of a meek, pious, kind and charitable turn of mind, the valiant Arjuna thought nothing of the curse; but his sons, who were of an arrogant and barbarous disposition, became the cause of its resulting in his death. Without their father's knowledge they took away Jamadagni's calf; and in consequence Parasurama attacked Arjuna and cut off his arms." His son retaliated by killing Jamadagni. Parashurama incensed at the slaughter of his father, having vowed in consequence to sweep away all Kshatriyas from the earth, seized his weapons; and slaying all the sons and grandsons of Arjuna, with thousands of the Haihayas, he turned the earth into a mass of ensanguined mud. Having thus cleared the earth of Kshatriyas, he became penetrated by deep compassion and retired to the forest. After some thousands of years had elapsed, the hero, naturally irascible, was taunted by Paravsu, the son of Raibhya and grandson of Visvamitra, in a public assembly in these words: 'Are not these virtuous men, Pratardana and the others, who are assembled at the sacrifice in the city of Yayati,—are they not Kshatriyas? Thou hast failed to execute thy threat, and vainly boastest in the assembly. Thou has withdrawn to the mountain from fear of those valiant Kshatriyas, while the earth has again become overrun by hundred of their race. `Hearing these words, Rama seized his weapons. The hundreds of Kshatriyas who had before been spared had now grown powerful kings. These, however, Parasurama now slew with their children, and all the numerous infants then unborn as they came into the world. Some, however, were preserved by their mothers." Those who are curious to know the



subsequent history of the Kshatriyas might be interested in the following extract from the Adiparvan.

" Having one and twenty time swept away all the Kshatriyas from the earth, the son of Jamadagni engaged in austerities on Mahendra the most excellent of mountains. After he had cleared the world of Kshatriyas, their widows came to the Brahmans, praying for offspring. The religious Brahmans, free from any impulse of lust cohabited at the proper seasons with these women, who in consequence became pregnant, and brought forth valiant Kshatriya boys and girls, to continue the Kshatriya stock. Thus was the Kshatriya race virtuously begotten by Brahmans on Kshatriya women, and became multiplied and long-lived, thence arose four castes inferior to the Brahmans." These instances of enmity were accompanied by challenges from one side to the other which shows how high were the tempers running on both sides. The conduct of king Nimi in yoking the Brahmins to his chariot and making them drag it like horses show how determined the Kshatriyas were to humiliate the Brahmans. The challenges uttered by Arjuna Kartavirya against the Brahmins indicates his determination to level them down. The Brahmins on their side were not slow to take up this challenge and send counter challenges to the kshatriyas not to provoke the Brahmins. This is very clear from the way Vayu the messenger or Ambassador of the Brahmins talks to Arjuna Kartavirya after he had issued his challenge to the Brahmans. Vayu tells Arjuna how the Brhmans Atri made sea water saltish by urinating in it, how Dandakas were overthrown by the Brahmans, how the Kshatriyas of the Talajaughas were destroyed by a single Brahmin Aurva; The striking power of the Brahmins is not only superior to that of the Kshatriya it is superior to that of the Devas and Vayu proceeds to tell Arjuna some of the victories achieved by the Brahmins over the Devas. He tells him how Varuna ran away with Bhadra the daughter of Soma and the wife of the Brahman Utathya of the race of Angiras how Utathya by his curse caused the earth to be dried up and how Varuna as a consequence submitted to Utathya and returned his wife. He tells him how once the *Devas* were conquered by the Asuras and the Danavas, how deprived of all oblations, and stripped of their dignity they came to the earth went to the Brahmin Agastya and applied to him for protection and how Agastya scorched the Danavas from heaven and earth and made him fly to the South and reinstated the Devas in their dominion. He tells Arjuna how once the Adityas were performing a sacrifice and while engaged in it were attacked by Danvas called Khalims, who came in ten in thousands to slay them, how the Adityas went to Indra and how Indra himself attacked by the Daityas not being able to render help to the Adityas went to the Brahmin Vashishtha for help and how Vashishtha taking mercy on the Adityas saved them by burning the Danavas

alive. He next tells Arjuna how the Danavas once fought with the Devas, how by enveloping them in dreadful darkness the Danavas slaughtered the Devas, how the Devas implored the Brahmin Atri to become the moon and dispell the glown around the sun which Atri did thereby saved the Devas from the Danvas. The last episode of Brahmin prowess which Vayu tells Arjuna is how the Brahmin Chyavana compelled Indra to admit the Ashwins to equal rank and drink Soma with them as a token of equality and how when Indra refused he took away both the earth and heaven from them and how he created a Demon Mada and put the Devas including Indra into his mouth and how he compelled Indra to admit the Ashwins to equal rank and drink Soma with them and how Indra ultimately surrendered to Chyavana.

Vayu did not merely recount these exploits of the Brahmins. He did something more. Every time he gave Arjuna an instance of the power of the Brahmins he ended by asking Arjuna pointed questions such as "Can you tell me of any Kshatriya who was superior to him (i.e. the Brahmins hero of the story) "Declare on your part, any Kshatriya who has been superior to him, "Tell me of any Kshatriya superior to Atri."

This class war between the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas must have gone on for ages. In the light of this the attitude of Manu towards this Class War comes as very strange. Consider the following verses from the Manu Smriti :

IV. 135. "Let him who desires prosperity, indeed, never despise a Kshatriya, a snake, and a learned Brahmana, be they ever so feeble."

IV. 136. "Because these three, when treated with disrespect, may utterly destroy him; hence a wise man must never despise them."

X. 322. "Kshatriyas prosper not without Brahmans, Brahmans prosper not without Kshatriyas; Brahmans and Kshatriyas, being closely united, prosper in this (world) and in the next." Here there is a clear attempt on the part of Manu to close the ranks. Against whom did Manu want the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas to close their ranks? Was this an attempt to forget and forgive or was the motive to combine them in a conspiracy to achieve some unholy purpose. What were the circumstances that forced Manu to advise the Brahmins to forget their age old enmity with Kshatriyas and seek the helping hand? The circumstances, must have been very hard and very pressing. For there was no room left for a reapproachment between the two. The Brahmins had hurled a terrible insult against the Kshatriyas and had wounded their price by saying quite openly that the Kshatriyas were the illegitimate children of Brahmins begotten by them on Kshatriya widows. The next offensive thing that the Brahmins had done to wound the feelings of the Kshatriyas was to extract from the latter a confession that the Brahmins were superior to the Kshatriyas in military prowess and had made Bhishma say :

"The prowess of the Brahmans can destroy even the gods. Those wise beings behold all these worlds. To them it is indifferent whether they are perfumed with sandal wood or deformed with mire, whether they eat or fast, whether they are clad in silk, or in sack cloth or skins. They can turn what is not divine into what is divine, and the converse; and can in their anger create other worlds with their guardians. They are the gods of the gods; and the cause of the cause. The ignorant Brahman is a god, whilst a learned Brahman is yet more a god, like the full ocean."

All this makes this sudden climb down by the Brahmins, this stopping down to win over the Kshatriyas very mysterious. What can be the key to this mystery?

## **CHAPTER 12**

### **Shudras and the Counter-Revolution**

*This is a 21-page foolscap typed manuscript. The cover page is having a title 'Shudras and the Counter-Revolution' and the text on next page starts with the same title. All these pages were loose and tagged together. Unfortunately, only 21 pages are available and the latter pages seem to be lost.— Editors.*

The laws of Manu relating to the Status of the Shudra make a very interesting reading for the simple reason that they have moulded the psychology of the Hindus and determined their attitude towards the Shudras who forms at the present and at all times the most numerous part of Hindu society. They are set out below under separate heads so that it may be possible for the reader to have a complete idea of the status given by Manu to the Community of Shudras.

Manu asks the householders of the Brahmana, Kshatriya and Vaishya Class :

IV. 61. Let him not dwell in a country where the rulers are Shudra. A Shudra is not to be deemed as a respectable person. For Manu enacts that:

XI. 24. A Brahmin shall never beg from a Shudra property for (performing) a sacrifice i.e. for religious purpose. All marriage ties with the Shudra were proscribed. Marriage with a woman belonging to any of the three other classes was forbidden. A Shudra was not to have any connection with a woman of the higher classes and an act of adultery committed by a Shudra with her was declared by Manu to be an offence involving capital punishment.

VIII. 374. A Shudra who has an intercourse with a woman of the higher caste guarded or unguarded, shall be punished in the following manner :

If she was unguarded, he loses the offending part. If she was guarded then he should be put to death and his property confiscated.

As to office Manu prescribes.

VIII. 20. A Brahmana who is only a Brahmana by decent i.e. one who has neither studied nor performed any other act required by the Vedas may, at the king's pleasure, interpret the law to him i.e. act as the Judge, but never a Shudra (however learned he may be).

VIII. 21. The kingdom of that monarch who looks on while a Shudra settles the law will sink low like a cow in a morass.

VIII. 272. If a Shudra arrogantly presumes to preach religion to Brahmins the King shall have poured burning oil in his mouth and ears.

In the matter of acquiring learning the knowledge Manu ordains as follows :

III. 156. He who instructs Shudra pupils and he whose teacher is a Shudra shall become disqualified for being invited to a Shudra.

IV. 99. He must never read the Vedas. . . . in the presence of the Shudras.

Manu's successors went much beyond him in the cruelty of their punishment of the Shudra for studying the Veda. For instance Katyayana lays down that if a Shudra overheard the Veda or ventured to utter a word of the Veda the King shall cut his tongue in twain and pour hot molten lead in his ears. As to right to property by the Shudra Manu enjoins as follows :

X. 129. No superfluous collection of wealth must be made by a Shudra, even though he has power to make it, since a servile man, who has amassed riches, becomes proud, and, by his insolence or neglect, gives pain to Brahmins.

VIII. 417. A Brahmanas may seize without hesitation if he be in distress for his subsistence, the goods of his Shudra. The Shudra can have only one occupation. This is one of the inexorable Laws of Manu. Says Manu :

1. 91. One occupation only, the Lord prescribed to the Shudra, to serve meekly these other three castes (namely Brahmin, Kshatriya and Vaishyas).

X. 121. If a Shudra, (unable to subsist by serving Brahmins) seeks a livelihood, he may serve Kshatriyas, or he may also seek to maintain himself by attending on a wealthy Vaisya.

X. 122. But let (Shudra) serve Brahmins, either for the sake of heaven, or with a view to both (this life and the next); for he who is called the servant of a Brahmana thereby gains all his ends.

X. 123. The service of Brahmanas alone is declared (to be) an excellent occupation for a Shudra for whatever else besides this he may perform will bear him no fruit. Service by Shudra is not left by Manu to be regulated as a free contract. If the Shudra refuses to serve there is a provision for conscription which runs as follows :

VIII. 413. A Brahmana may compel a Shudra, whether bought or unbought to do servile work; for he is created by the creator to be the slave of a Brahmana.

X. 124. They must allot to him out of their own family (property) a suitable maintenance, after considering his ability, his industry, and the number of those whom he is bound to support.

X. 125. The remnants of their food must be given to him, as well as their old household furniture.

A Shudra is required by Manu to be servile in his speech and manner towards the other classes.

VIII. 270. A Shudra who insults a twice-born man with gross invective, shall have his tongue cut out; for he is of low origin.

VIII. 271. If he mentions the names and castes of the (twice-born) with contumely, an iron nail, ten fingers long, shall be thrust red hot into his mouth.

Manu is not satisfied with this. He wants this servile status of the Shudra to be expressed in the names and surnames of persons belonging to that community. Manu says :

II. 31. Let the first part of a Brahman's name denote something auspicious, a Kshatriya's be connected with power and a Vaishya's with wealth, but a Shudra's, express something contemptible.

II. 32. The second part of a Brahman's name shall be a word implying happiness; of a Kshatriya's word implying protection; of a Vaishya's a term expressive of thriving and of a Shudra's an expression denoting services.

What was the position of the Shudra before Manu? Manu treats the Shudra as though he was an alien Non-Aryan not entitled to the social and religious privileges of the Aryan. Unfortunately the view that the Shudra was a Non-Aryan is too readily accepted by the generality of the people. But there can be no doubt that this view has not the slightest foundation in the literature of the ancient Aryans.

Reading the Religious literature of the ancient Aryans one comes across the names of various communities and groups of people. There were first of all the Aryans with their fourfold divisions of Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. Besides them and apart from them there were (i) Asuras (ii) Suras or Devas (iii) Yakshas (iv) Gandharvas (v) Kinnars (vi) Charanas (vii) Ashvins and (viii) Nishadas. The Nishadas were a jungle people primitive and uncivilized. The Gandharvas, Yakshas, Kinnars, Charanas and Ashvins were professional classes and not communities. The word Asura is generic name given to various tribes known by their tribal names of Daityas, Danavas, Dasyus, Kalananjas, Kaleyayas, Kalins, Nagas, Nivata-Kavachas, Paulomas, Pishachas and Raxasas. We do not know if the Suras and Devas were

composed of various tribes as the Asuras were. We only know the leaders of the Deva Community. The well known amongst them were Brahma, Vishnu Rudra, Surya, Indra, Varuna, Soma etc.

Due mostly to the ignorant interpretations of Sayanacharya some very curious beliefs prevail even among the best informed people about these communities namely the Aryans, the Asuras and the Devas and their inter-relation and their consanguinity. It is believed that the Asuras were not a human species at all. They are held to have been ghosts and goblins who plagued the Aryans with their nocturnal visitations. The Suras or Devas are understood to be poetic deifications of nature's forces. With regard to the Aryans the belief is that they were a fair race with sharp nose and had a great deal of colour prejudice. As to the Dasyus it is asserted that a Dasyu is only another name for a Shudra. The Shudras it is said formed the aboriginals of India. They were dark and flat nosed. The Aryans who invaded India conquered them and made them slaves and as a badge of slavery gave them the name Dasyu which it is said comes from the word Das which means a slave.

Every one of these beliefs is unfounded. The Asuras and Suras were communities of human beings as the Aryans were. The Asuras and Suras were descended from a common father Kashapa. The story is that Daksha Prajapati had 60 daughters, of them thirteen were given in marriage to Kashapa. Diti and Aditi were two among the 13 of Kashapa's wives. Those born to Diti were called Asuras and those born to Aditi were called Suras or Devas. The two fought a long and a bloody battle for the sovereignty of the world. This no doubt is mythology and mythology though it is history in hyperbole is still history.

The Aryans were not a race. The Aryans were a collection of people. The cement that held them together was their interest in the maintenance of a type of culture called Aryan culture. Any one who accepted the Aryan culture was an Aryan. Not being a race there was no fixed type of colour and physiognomy which could be called Aryan. There was no dark and flat nose people for the Aryans to distinguish themselves from. The whole of this edifice of colour prejudice as being factors for division and antagonism between Aryans and the Dasyus is based upon a wrong meaning given to the two words *Varna* and *Anas* which are used with reference to the Dasyus. The word *Varna* is taken to mean colour and the word *Anas* is taken to mean without nose. Both these meanings are erroneous. *Varna* means Caste or group and *Anas* if read as An-As means uncultivated speech. That statement that the Aryans had a colour prejudice which determined their social order is arrant nonsense. If there were any people who were devoid of colour

prejudice it is the Aryans and that is because there was no dominant colour to distinguish themselves.

It is wrong to say that the Dasyus were non-Aryans by race. The Dasyus were not a pre-Aryan race of aboriginals of India. The Dasyus were members of the Aryan community who were deprived of the title of Arya for opposing some belief or cult which was an essential part of the Aryan Culture. How this belief that the Dasyus were Non-Aryans by race could have arisen it is difficult to understand. In the Rig Veda (X. 49) Indra says : "I (Indra) have killed with my thunderbolt for the good of the man, known as Kavi. I have protected Kupa by adopting means of protection. I took up the thunderbolt for killing Susna. I have deprived the Dasyus of the appellation of Arya."

Nothing can be more positive and definite than this statement of Indra that the Dasyus were Aryans. Further and better proof of this fact can be had in the impeachment of Indra for the various atrocities he had committed. In the list of atrocities for which Indra was impeached there was one charge namely the killing of Vratra. Vratra was the leader of the Dasyus. It is unthinkable that such a charge could be framed against Indra if the Dasyus were not Aryans.

It is erroneous to believe that the Shudras were conquered by the Aryan invaders. In the first place the story that the Aryans came from outside India and invaded the natives has no evidence to support it. There is a large body of evidence that India is the home of the Aryans. In the second place there is no evidence anywhere of any warfare having taken place between Aryans and Dasyus but the Dasyus have nothing to do with the Shudras. In the third place it is difficult to believe that the Aryans were a powerful people capable of much military prowess. Any one who reads the history of the Aryans in India in their relation to the Devas will be reminded of the relationship that subsisted between the Viellens and their lords during the feudal times. The Devas were the feudal lords and the Aryans were the Villens. The innumerable sacrifices which the Aryans performed have the look of fudal dues paid to the Deva. This servility of the Aryans to the Devas was due to the fact that without the help and the protection of the Devas they could not withstand the assaults of the Asuras. It is too much to presume that so effete a people could have conquered the Shudras. Lastly there was no necessity to conquer the Shudra. Thy were Aryans in the only sense in which the word Aryan is used, namely, the upholders of the Aryans Culture. Two things are clear about the Shudras. Nobody has ever contended that they were dark and flat nosed. Nobody has contended that they were defeated or enslaved by the Aryans. It is wrong to treat the Dasyus and Shudras as one and the same. As a people they may be the same. But culturally they were quite different. The Dasyus were Non-Aryans in the sense they had fallen away and rebelled

against the Aryan culture. The Shudras on the other hand were Aryans i.e. they were believers in the Aryan way of life. The Shudra was accepted as an Aryan and as late as Kautilya's Artha Shastra was addressed an Arya.

The Shudra was an integral, natural and valued member of the Aryan Society is proved by a prayer which is found in the Yajur Veda and which is offered by the Sacrificer. It runs as follows : "..... O Gods

Give lustre to our holy priests, set lustre in our ruling chiefs, Lustre to Vaisiyas, Sudras : Give, through lustre; Lustre unto me." It is a remarkable prayer, remarkable because it shows that the Shudra was a member of the Aryan Community and was also a respected member of it.

That the Shudras were invited to be present at the coronation of the King along with Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas is proved by the description given in the Mahabharata of the coronation of Yudhishthira the eldest brother of the Pandavas. Shudra took part in the consecration of the King. According to ancient writer called Nilkantha speaking of the coronation ceremony expressly says : "that the four chief Ministers, Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra consecrated the new king. Then the leaders of each Varna and by the Castes lower still consecrated him with the holy water. Then followed acclamation by the twice-born. In the post-vedic period preceding Manu there was group of the representatives of the people called the Ratnis. The Ratnis played a significant part in the investiture of the King. The Ratnis were so called because they held the Ratna (jewel) which was a symbol of sovereignty. The king received his sovereignty only when the Ratnis handed over to him the jewel of sovereignty and on receiving his sovereignty the King went to the house of each of the Ratnis and made an offering to him. It is a significant fact that the Shudra was one of the Ratnis.

Shudras were members of the two political Assemblies of ancient times namely the Janapada and Paura and as a member of this he was entitled to special respect even from a Brahmin. That the Shudra in the Ancient Aryan Society had reached a high political status is indisputable. They could become ministers of State. The Mahabharat bears testimony to this. Enumerating the different classes of ministers within his memory the writer of the Mahabharata mentions a list of 37 Ministers of whom four are Brahmins, eight Kshatriyas, twenty one Vaishyas, three Shudras and one Suta.

Shudras did not stop with being ministers of State. They even became Kings. The story of Shudras which is given in the Rig Veda stands in cruel contrast with the views expressed by Manu regarding the eligibility of the Shudra to be a King. The reign of Sudas if referred to at all is referred only in connection with the terrible contest between Vashishtha and Vishvamitra as to who should become the purohit or Royal priest of King Sudas. The issue



involved in the contest was as to the right to officiate as the Purohit or the King. Vashishtha who was a Brahmin and who was already an officiating priest of Sudas claimed that a Brahmin alone could become the Purohit of a King while Vishvamitra who was a Kshatriya contended that a Kshatriya was competent for that office. Vishvamitra succeeded and in his turn became the Purohit of Sudas. The contest is indeed memorable because the issue involved in it is very crucial although the result has not been a permanent deprivation of the Brahmins. But there can be no doubt the story is probably the best piece of social history that is to be found in the ancient literature. Unfortunately nobody has taken serious notice of it. Nobody has even asked who this King was. Sudas was the son of Paijavana and Paijavana is the son of Devodas who was the King of Kasi i.e. Benares. What was the Varna of Sudas? Few would believe if they were told that King Sudas was a Shudra. But that is a fact and it can be proved by the testimony of the Mahabharata where in the Santipurva a reference is made to this *Paijavana*. It is stated that Paijavana was a Shudra. In the light of this the story of Sudas sheds new light on the status of the Shudra in the Aryan Society. It shows that a Shudra could be a reigning monarch. It also shows that both the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas not only saw no humiliation in serving a Shudra King but they with each other to secure his patronage and were ready to perform vedic ceremonies at his house.

It cannot be said that there were no Shudra Kings in later times. On the contrary history shows that the two dynasties which preceded Manu were dynasties of Shudras Kings. The Nandas who ruled from B.C.413 to B.C. 322 were Shudras. The mauryas who succeeded the Nandas and who ruled from 322 B.C, to 183 B.C. were also Shudras. What more glaring piece of evidence can there be to show the high dignity enjoyed by the Shudra than to point to the case of Asoka who was not merely the Emperor of India but a Shudra and his Empire was the Empire built by the Shudras.

On the question of the right of the Shudra to study the Vedas a reference may be made to the Chhandogya Upanishad (V. 1.2). It relates the story of one Janasruti to whom Veda Vidya was taught by the preceptor Raikva. This Janasruti was a Shudra. This story if it is a genuine story leaves no doubt that there was a time when there was no bar against the Shudra in the matter of studying the Vedas.

Not only was Shudra free to study the Vedas but there were Shudras who had reached the status of Rishis and has been composers of the Hymns of the Vedas. The story of the Rishi Kavasha Aliusha is very illuminating. He was a Rishi and the author of several hymns of the Tenth Book of the Rig-Veda.

On the question of the spiritual eligibility of the Shudra to perform the Vedic ceremonies and sacrifices the following data may be presented. Jaimin the author of the Purva Mimamsa mentions an ancient teacher by name Badari—whose work is lost as an exponent of the view that even Shudra could perform Vedic sacrifices. The Bharadvaja Srouta Sutra (v. 28) admits that there exists another school of thought which holds that a Sudra can consecrate the three sacred fires necessary for the performance of a Vedic Sacrifice. Similarly the Commentator of the Katyayana Srouta Sutra (I & 5) admits that there are certain Vedic texts which lead to the inference that the Shudra was eligible to perform Vedic rites. In the Satpath Brahmana (1. 1.4.12) there is enunciated a rule of etiquette which the priest officiating at the performance of a sacrifice is required to observe. It relates to the mode in which the priest should address the Haviskut (the person celebrating the sacrifice) calling upon him to begin the ceremony. The rule says:

"Now there are four different forms of this call, viz. 'Come hither' (Ehi) in the case of a Brahmana; 'approach' (Agahi) and 'hasten hither' (Adarva) in the case of a Vaishya and a member of the Military caste and 'run hither' (Adhava) in that of a Shudra." In the Satpatha Brahman there is evidence to show that the Shudra was eligible to perform the Soma Yaga and to partake of the divine drink Soma. It says that in the Soma Yaga in place of a 'payovrata' (vow to drink milk only) Mastu (whey) is prescribed for the Shudra. In another place the same Satapatha Brahmanasays :

"There are four classes, the Brahmin, Rajanya, Vaishya and Sudra. There is no one of these who dislikes Soma. If any one of them however should do so, let there be an atonment." This means that the drinking of Soma was not only permissible but it was compulsory on all including the Shudra. But in the story of the Ashvins there is definite evidence that the Shudra had a right to the divine drink of Soma. The Ashvins as the story goes once happened to behold Sukanya when she had just bathed and when her person was bare. She was young girl married to a Rishi by name Chyavana who at the time of marriage was so old as to be dying almost any day. The Ashvins were captivated by the beauty of Sukanya and said "accept one of us for your husband, it behoveth thee not to spend thy youth fruitlessly."

She refused saying "I am devoted to my husband." They again spoke to her and this time proposed a bargain—" We two are the celestial physicians of note. We will make thy husband young and graceful. Do thou then select one of us as thy husband." She went to her husband and communicated to him the terms of the bargain. Chyavana said to Sukanya "Do thou so" and the bargain was carried out and Chyavana was made a young man by the Ashwins. Subsequently a question arose whether the Ashwins were entitled

to Soma which was the drink of the Gods. Indra objected saying that the Ashwins were Shudras and therefore not entitled to Soma. Chyavana who had received perpetual youth from the Ashwins set aside the contention and compelled Indra to give them Soma.

All these provisions can have no meaning unless the Shudra was in fact performing the Vedic ceremonies to which they relate—there is evidence to show that a Shudra woman took part in the Vedic sacrifice known as the Ashwamedha.

With regard to the Upanayana ceremony and the right to wear the sacred thread there is nowhere an express prohibition against the Shudra. On the other hand in the Sansakara Ganapati there is an express provision declaring the Shudra to be eligible for Upanayan. The Shudra though belonging to a lower class was nonetheless a free citizen in days before Manu cannot be gainsaid. Consider the following provisions in Kautilya's Artha Shastra :

"The selling or mortgaging by kinsmen of the life of a Sudra who is not a born slave, and has not attained majority, but is an Arya in birth shall be punished with a fine of 2 panas."

"Deceiving a slave of his money or depriving him of the privileges he can exercise as an Arya (Aryabhava), shall be punished with half the fine (levied for enslaving the life of an Arya)."

"Failure to set a slave at liberty on the receipt of a required amount of ransom shall be punished with a fine of 12 panas; putting a slave under confinement for no reason (samrodhaschakaranat) shall likewise be punished.

"The offspring of a man who has sold himself off as a slave shall be an Arya. A slave shall be entitled without prejudice to his master's work but also the inheritance he has received from his father."

Why did Manu suppress the Shudra?

This riddle of the Shudra is not a simple riddle. It is a complex one. The Aryans were for ever attempting to Aryanize the Non-Aryans i.e. bringing them within the pale of the Aryan Culture. So keen were the Aryans on Aryanization that they had developed a religious ceremony for the mass conversion of the Non-Aryans. The ceremony was called Vratya-stoma. Speaking of the Vratya-Stoma Mahamahopadhyaya Haraprasad Shastri says :

"The ceremony by which these Vratyas were purified, and which is described in the Pancavimsa Brahmana differed at least in one particular from other great ceremonies of the Vedic times, namely, while other ceremonies had only one sacrificer and his wife in the hall of sacrifice, this ceremony had thousands of sacrificers. One of them, the wisest, the richest or the most

powerful acted as Grahapati or Patriarch and the rest simply followed him. The Grahapati had to pay a higher Daksina or fee than the rest."

"I consider this to be a device by which thousands and thousands of Vratyas were admitted to the society of the Rsis by one ceremony, and such ceremonies were of frequent occurrence, thus admitting hordes after hordes of nomadic Aryans into settled habits. The purified Vratyas were not allowed to bring their possessions in Vratya life with them in settled life. They had to leave them to those who remained Vratyas still or do the so-called Brahmins of the Magadha-desa, which, as I have elsewhere shown, was mostly inhabited by men whom the Rsis looked down upon."

"But when the Vratyas were admitted to settled life, they were admitted as fully equals. The Rsis used to eat food cooked by them, and they used to eat food cooked by the Rsi. They were taught all the three Vidyas, Sama, Rk, and Yajus, and they were allowed to study the Vedas, and teach them, and to sacrifice for themselves and for others, that is, they were considered as fully equal. Not only were they treated as fully equal but they attained the highest proficiency of a Rsi. Samans were revealed to them, and even Rks. One of the purified Vratyas, Kausitaki was allowed to collect Brahmins of the Rig-Veda, which collection still goes under his name."

The Aryans were not only converting to their way of life the willing non-Aryans they were also attempting to make converts from among the unwilling Asuras who were opposed to the Aryans, their cult of sacrifice, their theory of Chaturvarna and even to their Vedas which according to the mythology the Asuras stole away from the Aryans. The story of Vishnu rescuing Pralhad by killing his father the Asura called Hiranya Kashapu on the ground that Pralhad was willing to be converted to the Aryan Culture while Hiranya Kashapu was opposed to it is an illustration in point. Here are instances of Non-Aryans being naturalized and enfranchized. Why was an opposite attitude taken against the Shudra? Why was the Shudra fully naturalized and fully enfranchized, denaturalized and disfranchized?

The treatment given to the *Nishadas* gives a point to this riddle which should not be overlooked. The Ancient Sanskrit Literature is full of reference to the five tribes. They are described under various appellations such as Panch-Krishtayah, Panch-Kshitayah, Panch-Kshityas Manushyah, Panch-Charshanayah, Panch-Janah, Panchi-janya viz., Pancha-Bhuma, Panchajata. There is a difference of opinion as to what these terms denote. Sayanacharya the Commentator of Rig Veda says that these expressions refer to the four Varnas and the Nishads. The Vishnu Purana gives the following story about the Nishads :

"7. The Maiden named Sunitha, who was the first born of Mrityu (Death) was given as wife to Anga; and of her Vena was born."

8. This son of Mrityu's daughter, infected with the taint of his maternal grandfather, was born corrupt, as if by nature.

9. When Vena was inaugurated as king by the eminent rishis, he caused this proclamation to be made on the earth; "Men must not sacrifice, or give gifts, or present oblations. Who else but myself is the enjoyer of sacrifices? I am for ever the lord of offerings."

10. Then all the rishis approaching the king with respectful salutations, said to him in a gentle and conciliatory tone :

11.' Hear, O King, what we have to say :

12. We shall worship Hari, the monarch of the Gods, and the lord of all sacrifices with a Dirghasattra (prolonged sacrifice), from which the highest benefits will accrue to your kingdom, your person and your subjects. May blessing rest upon you? You shall have a share in the ceremony.

13. Vishnu the Lord of sacrifices Male, being propitiated by us with this rite, will grant all the objects of your desire. Hari, the Lord of Sacrifices, bestows on those kings in whose country he is honoured with oblation everything that they wish." Vena replied : "What other being is superior to me? Who else but I should be adored? Who is this person called Hari, whom you regard as the Lord of sacrifice? Brahma Janardana, Rudra, Indra, Vayu, Yama, Ravi (the Sun) Agni, Varuna, Dhatri, Pushan, Earth, the Moon,— these and the other gods who curse and bless are all present in king's person: for he is composed of all the gods. Knowing this. ye must act in conformity with my commands. Brahmans ye must neither give gifts, nor present oblations nor sacrifices.

14. As obedience to their husbands is esteemed the highest duty of women, so is the observance of my orders incumbent upon you." The Rishis answered. ' Give permission great kings: let not religion perish: this whole world is but a modified form of oblations.

15. When religion perishes the whole world is destroyed with it, When Vena although thus admonished and repeatedly addressed by the eminent rishis, did not give his permission, then all the munis, filled with wrath and indignation, cried out to one another, "Slay, slay the sinner."

16. This man of degraded life, who blasphemes the sacrificed Male, the god, the Lord without beginning or end, is not fit to be lord of the earth.' So saying the munis smote with blades of kusa grass consecrated by texts this king who had been already smitten by his blasphemy of the divine being and his other offences. The munis afterwards beheld dust all round, and asked the people who were standing near what that was.

17. They were informed: "In this country which has no king, the people being distressed, have become robbers, and have begun to seize the property of others.

18. It is from these robbers rushing impetuously, and plundering other men's goods, that this great dust is seen?" Then all the munis, consulting together, rubbed with force the thigh of the king, who was childless, in order to produce a son. From his thigh when rubbed there was produced a man like a charred log, with flat face, and extremely short.

19. "What shall I do," cried the man, in distress, to the Brahmans. They said to him, "Sit down (nishida); and from this he became a Nishada.

20. From his sprang the Nishadas dwelling in the Vindhya mountains, distinguished by their wicked deeds.

21. By this means the sin of the king departed out of him; and so were the Nishads produced, the offspring of the wickedness of Vena."

This is a mythological origin of the Nishads. But it contains historical facts. It proves that the Nishads were a low, primitive jungle tribe living in the forests of the Vindhya mountains, that they were a wicked people i.e. opposed to the Aryan Culture. They invented a mythology for explaining their origin and connecting them with the Aryan Society. All this was done in order to support the inclusion of the Nishads into the Aryan fold though not in the Aryan Society. Now there is nowhere any sort of disabilities imposed upon Nishads a low, uncivilized and foreign tribe. Question is why were the disabilities imposed upon the Shudra, who was civilized and an Arya?

## CHAPTER 13

### The Woman and the Counter-Revolution

*There is one copy with a title 'The Woman and the Counter-Revolution'. There is another copy of the same text with a title, 'The Riddle of the Woman'. The Editorial Board felt that this essay would be appropriate in this Volume rather than in the volume of Riddles in Hinduism'.—Editors.*

Manu can hardly be said to be more tender to women than he was to the Shudra. He starts with a low opinion of women. Manu proclaims :

II. 213. It is the nature of women to seduce men in this (world): for that reason the wise are never unguarded in (the company of) females.

II. 214. For women are able to lead astray in (this) world not only a fool, but even a learned man, and (to make) him a slave of desire and anger.

II. 215. One should not sit in a lonely place with one's mother, sister or daughter; for the senses are powerful, and master even a learned man.

IX. 14. Women do not care for beauty, nor is their attention fixed on age; (thinking); '(It is enough that) he is a man', they give themselves to the handsome and to the ugly.

IX. 15. Through their passion for men, through their mutable temper, through their natural heartlessness, they become disloyal towards their husbands, however, carefully they may be guarded in this (world).

IX. 16. Knowing their disposition, which the Lord of creatures laid in them at the creation, to be such, (every) man should most strenuously exert himself to guard them.

IX. 17. (When creating them) Manu allotted to women (a love of their) bed, (of their) seat and (of) ornament, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice, and bad conduct.

The laws of Manu against women are of a piece with this view. Women are not to be free under any circumstances. In the opinion of Manu:

IX. 2. Day and night women must be kept in dependence by the males (of their families), and, if they attach themselves to sexual enjoyments, they must be kept under one's control.

IX. 3. Her father protects (her) in childhood, her husband protects (her) in youth, and her sons protect (her) in old age; a woman is never fit for independence.

IX. 5. Women must particularly be guarded against evil inclinations, however trifling (they may appear); for, if they are not guarded, they will bring sorrow on two families.

IX. 6. Considering that the highest duty of all castes, even weak husbands (must) strive to guard their wives.

IV. 147. By a girl, by a young woman, or even by an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her own house.

V. 148. In childhood a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent.

V. 149. She must not seek to separate herself from her father, husband, or sons; by leaving them she would make both (her own and her husband's) families contemptible. Woman is not to have a right to divorce.

IX. 45. The husband is declared to be one with the wife, which means that there could be no separation once a woman is married. Many Hindus stop here as though this is the whole story regarding Manu's law of divorce and keep on idolizing it by comforting their conscience by holding out the view that Manu regarded marriage as sacrament and therefore, did not allow divorce. This of course is far from the truth. His law against divorce had a very

different motive. It was not to tie up a man to a woman but it was to tie up the woman to a man and to leave the man free.

For Manu does not prevent a man from giving; up his wife. Indeed he not only allows him to abandon his wife but he also permits him to sell her. But what he does is to prevent the wife from becoming free. See what Manu says:

IX. 46. Neither by sale nor by repudiation is a wife released from her husband.

The meaning is that a wife, sold or repudiated by her husband, can never become the legitimate wife of another who may have bought or received her after she was repudiated. If this is not monstrous nothing can be. But Manu was not worried by consideration of justice or injustice of his law. He wanted to deprive woman of the freedom she had under the Buddhistic regime. He knew that by her misuse of her liberty, by her willingness to marry the Shudra the system of the gradation of the Varna had been destroyed. Manu was outraged by her license and in putting a stop to it he deprived her of her liberty.

A wife was reduced by manu to the level of a slave in the matter of property.

IX. 416. A wife, a son, and a slave, these three are declared to have no property; the wealth which they earn is (acquired) for him to whom they belong.

When she becomes a widow Manu allows her maintenance, if her husband was joint, and a widow's estate in the property of her husband, if he was separate from his family. But Manu never allows her to have any dominion over property.

A woman under the laws of Manu is subject to corporal punishment and Manu allows the husband the right to beat his wife.

VIII. 299. A wife, a son, a slave, a pupil and a younger brother of full blood, who have committed faults, may be beaten with a rope or a split bamboo. In other matters woman was reduced by Manu to the same position as the Shudra.

The study of the Veda was forbidden to her by Manu as it was to the Shudra.

II. 66. Even for a woman the performance of the *Sanskaras* are necessary and they should be performed. But they should be performed without uttering the Veda Mantras.

IX. 18. Women have no right to study the Vedas. That is why their Sanskars are performed without Veda Mantras. Women have no knowledge of religion because they have no right to know the Vedas. The uttering of the Veda Mantras is useful for removing sin. As women cannot utter the Veda Mantras they are as unclean as untruth is.



Offering sacrifices according to Brahmanism formed the very soul of religion. Yet Manu will not allow women to perform them. Manu ordains that :

XI. 36. A woman shall not perform the daily sacrifices prescribed by the Vedas.

XI, 37, If she does it she will go to hell.

To disable her from performing such sacrifices Manu prevents her from getting the aid and services of a Brahmin priest.

IV. 205. A Brahman must never eat food given at a sacrifice performed by a woman.

IV. 206. Sacrifices performed by women are inauspicious and not acceptable to God. They should therefore be avoided. Woman was not to have any intellectual pursuits nor free will, nor freedom of thought. She was not to join any heretical sect such as Buddhism. If she continues to adhere to it till death she is not to be given the libation of water as is done in the case of all dead.

Finally a word regarding the ideal of life, Manu has sought to place before a woman. It had better be stated in his own words :

V. 151. Him to whom her father may give her, or her brother with the father's permission, she shall obey as long as he lives and when he is dead, she must not insult his memory.

V. 154. Though destitute or virtuous, or seeking pleasure elsewhere, or devoid of good qualities, yet a husband must be constantly worshipped as a god by a faithful wife.

V. 155. No sacrifice, no vow, no fast must be performed by women, apart from their husbands; if a wife obeys her husband, she will for that reason alone be exalted in heaven. Then comes the choicest texts which form the pith and the marrow of this ideal which Manu prescribes for women:

V. 153. The husband who wedded her with sacred Mantras, is always a source of happiness to his wife, both in season and out of season, in this world and in the next.

V. 150. She must always be cheerful, clever in the management of her household affairs, careful in cleaning her utensils, and economical in expenditure.

This the Hindus regard as a very lofty ideal for a woman! Compare with this the position of the woman before the days of Manu.

That a woman was entitled to Upanayan is clear from the Atharva Veda where a girl is spoken of as being eligible for marriage having finished her Brahmacharya. From the Shrauta Sutras it is clear that women could repeat the Mantras of the Vedas and that women were taught to read the Vedas. Panini's Ashtadhyai bears testimony to the fact that women attended

Gurukul and studied the various Shakhas of the Veda and became expert in Mimamsa. Patanjali's Maha Bhashya shows that women were teachers and taught Vedas to girl students. The stories of women entering into public discussions with men on most abstruse subjects of religion, philosophy and metaphysics are by no means few. The story of public disputation between Janaka and Sulbha, between Yajnavalkya and Gargi, between Yajnavalkya and Maitrei and between Shankaracharya and Vidyadhari shows that Indian women in pre-Manu's time could rise to the highest pinnacle of learning and education.

That women in pre-Manu days were highly respected cannot be disputed. Among the Ratnis who played so prominent a part in the coronation of the King in Ancient India was the queen and the King made her an offering as he did to the others. Not only the king elect did homage to the Queen, he worshipped his other wives of lower castes. In the same way the King offers salutation after the coronation ceremony to the ladies of the chiefs of the shremes (guides).

In the days of Kautilya women were deemed to have attained their age of majority at 12 and men at 16. The age of majority was in all probability the age of marriage. That the marriages were post puberty marriages is clear from Baudhayana's Grihya Sutras where an expiatory ceremony is specially prescribed in the case of a bride passing her menses on the occasion of her marriage.

In Kautilya there is no law as to age of consent. That is because marriages were post puberty marriages and Kautilya is more concerned with cases in which a bride or a bridegroom is married without disclosing the fact of his or her having had sexual intercourse before marriage with another person or maiden in menses having had sexual intercourse. In the former case Kautilya says :

"Any person who has given a girl in marriage without announcing her guilt of having laid with another shall not only be punished with a fine but also be made to return the Sulka and Stridhana. Any person receiving a girl in marriage without announcing the blemishes of the bridegroom shall not only pay double the above fine, but also forfeit the Sulka and Stridhana (he paid for the bride). In regard to the latter case the rule in Kautilya is :

"It is no offence for a man of equal caste and rank to have connection with a maiden who has been unmarried three years after her first menses. Nor is it an offence for a man, even of different caste, to have connection with a maiden who has spent more than three years after her first menses and has no jewellery on her person."

Unlike Manu Kautilya's idea is monogamy. Man can marry more than one wife only under certain conditions. They are given by Kautilya in the following terms<sup>1</sup> :

"If a woman either brings forth no (live) children, or has no male issue, or is barren, her husband shall wait for eight years (before marrying another). If she bears only a dead child, he has to wait for ten years. If she brings forth only females, he has to wait for twelve years. Then if he is desirous to have sons, he may marry another. In case of violating this rule, he shall be made to pay her not only Sulka, her property (Stridhana) and an adequate monetary compensation (adhivedanika martham), but also a fine of 24 panas to the Government. Having given the necessary amount of Sulka and property (Stridhana) even to those women who have not received such things on the occasion of their marriage with him, and also having given his wives the proportionate compensation and an adequate subsistence (vrutti), he may marry any number of women; for women are created for the sake of sons."

Unlike Manu in Kautilya's time women could claim divorce on the ground of mutual enmity and hatred.

"A woman, hating her husband, cannot dissolve her marriage with him against his will. Nor can a man dissolve his marriage with his wife against her will. But from mutual enmity, divorce may be obtained (parasparam dveshanmokshah). If a man, apprehending danger from his wife, desires divorce (mokshamichchhet), he shall return to her whatever she was given (on the occasion of her marriage). If a woman, under the apprehension of danger from her husband, desires divorce, she shall forfeit her claim to her property." A wife can abandon her husband if he is a bad character.

" A woman who has a right to claim maintenance for an unlimited period of time shall be given as much food and clothing (grasacchadana) as necessary for her, or more than is necessary in proportion to the income of the maintainer (yathapurushapari-vapam va). If the period (for which such things are to be given to her with one-tenth of the amount in addition) is limited, then a certain amount of money, fixed in proportion to the income of the maintainer, shall be given to her; so also if she has not been given her Sulka, property, and compensation (due to her for allowing her husband to re-marry). If she places herself under the protection of any one belonging to her father-in-law's family (Svasurakula), or if she begins to live independently, then her husband shall not be sued (for her maintenance). Thus the determination of maintenance is dealt with."

In the days of Kautilya there was no ban on woman or a widow remarrying :

"On the death of her husband a woman, desirous to lead a pious life, shall at once receive not only her endowment and jewellery (sthapyabharanam),

but also the balance of Sulka due to her. If after obtaining these two things she re-married another, she shall be caused to pay them back together with interest (on their value). If she is desirous of a second marriage (kutumbarkama), she shall be given on the occasion of her re-marriage (nivesakale) whatever either her father-in-law or her husband or both had given to her. The time at which women can re-marry shall be explained in connection with the subject of long sojourn of husbands.

"If a widow marries any man other than of her father-in-law's selection (svasurapratilomyenanivishtha), she shall forfeit whatever had been given to her by her father-in-law and her deceased husband.

"The kinsmen (gnatis) of a woman shall return to her old father-in-law whatever property of her own she had taken with her while re-marrying a kinsman. Whoever justly takes a woman under his protection shall equally protect her property. No woman shall succeed in her attempt to establish her title to the property of her deceased husband, after she re-marries.

"if she lives a pious life, she may enjoy it (dharmakama bhunjita). No woman with a son or sons shall (after re-marriage) be at liberty to make free use of her own property (stridhana); for that property of hers, her sons shall receive. "If a woman after re-marriage attempts to take possession of her own property under the plea of maintaining her sons by her former husband, she shall be made to endow it in their name. If a woman has many male children by many husbands, then she shall conserve her property in the same condition as she had received from her husbands. Even that property which has been given her with full powers of enjoyment and disposal, a remarried woman shall endow in the name of her sons.

"A barren widow who is faithful to the bed of her dead husband may, under the protection of her teacher, enjoy her property as long as she lives; for it is to ward off calamities that women are endowed with property. On her death, her property shall pass into the hands of her kinsman (Dayada). If the husband is alive and the wife is dead, then her sons and daughters shall divide her property among themselves. If there are no sons, her daughters shall have it. In their absence her husband shall take that amount of money (sulka) which he had given her, and her relatives shall re-take whatever in the shape of gift or dowry they had presented her. Thus the determination of the property of a woman is dealt with."

"Wives who belong to Sudra, Vaisya, Kshatriya or Brahman caste, and who have not given birth to children, should wait as long as a year, two, three and four years respectively for their husbands who have gone abroad for a short time; but if they are such as have given birth to children, they should wait for their absent husbands for more than a year. If they are provided with

maintenance, they should wait for twice the period of time just mentioned. If they are not so provided with, their well-to-do gñatis should maintain them either for four or eight years. Then the gñatis should leave them to marry, after taking what had been presented to them on the occasion of their marriages. If the husband is a Brahman, studying abroad, his wife who has no issue should wait for him for ten years; but if she has given birth to children, she should wait for twelve years. If the husband is a servant of the king, his wife should wait for him till her death; but even if she bears children to a savarna husband (i.e. a second husband belonging to the same gotra as that of the former husband), with a view to avoid the extinction of her race, she shall not be liable to contempt thereof (savarnatascha prajata na ' pavadam labheta). If the wife of an absent husband lacks maintenance and is deserted by well-to-do gñatis, she may re-marry one whom she likes and who is in a position to maintain her and relieve her misery."

Unlike Manu every precaution was taken to guarantee economic independence to a married woman. This is clear from the following provisions in Kautilya's Arthashastra relating to wife's endowment and maintenance :

"Means of subsistence (vruti) or jewellery (abadhya) constitutes what is called the property of a woman. Means of subsistence valued at above two thousand shall be endowed (in her name). There is no limit to jewellery. It is no guilt for the wife to make use of this property in maintaining her son, her daughter-in-law, or herself, whenever her absent husband has made no provision for her maintenance. In calamities, disease and famine, in warding off dangers and in charitable acts, the husband, too, may make use of this property. Neither shall there be any complaint against the enjoyment of this property by mutual consent by a couple who have brought forth a twin. Nor shall there be any complaint if this property has been enjoyed for three years by those who are wedded in accordance with the customs of the first four kinds of marriage. But the enjoyment of this property in the cases of Gandharva and Asura marriages shall be liable to be restored together with interest on it. In the case of such marriages as are called Rakshasa and Paisacha, the use of this property shall be dealt with as theft. Thus the duty of marriage is dealt with."

"A woman who has a right to claim maintenance for an unlimited period of time shall be given as much food and clothing (grasachhadan) as is necessary for her, or more than is necessary in proportion to the income of the maintainer (yatha-purushaparivapam va). If the period (for which such things are to be given to her with one-tenth of the amount in addition) is limited, then a certain amount of money, fixed in proportion to the income of the maintainer, shall be given to her; so also if she has not been given her

sulka, property, and compensation (due to her for allowing her husband to re-marry). If she places herself under the protection of any one belonging to her father-in-law's family (svasurkula), or if she begins to live independently, then her husband shall not be sued (for her maintenance). Thus the determination of maintenance is dealt with." Surprising as it may appear in Kautilya's time a wife could bring an action in a court of law against her husband for assault and defamation.

In short in pre-Manu days a woman was free and equal partner of man. Why did Manu degrade her?

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